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FEUERHERZ by Luigi Falorni
KIRSCHBLÜETEN – HANAMI by Doris Doerrie
PORTRAITS Leander Haussmann, Ute Wieland, Corazón International, Hannah Herzsprung
SPECIAL REPORT Silent Cinema
focus on SILENT CINEMA

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A GOOD LAUGH GOES A LONG WAY
A portrait of Leander Haussmann
COMING FULL CIRCLE
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ONCE UPON A TIME: A STUFFED BIRD

Of course, now and then – and here and there – it has been possible to see silent films somehow over the past thirty years. But only somehow. A poor state of affairs; as poor as the state of the films themselves and the conditions under which they and a host of interested viewers were brought together. The German cultural and film critic Helmut Faerber summed things up as they appeared to him in the year 1983 in the following way: “A continuous, variable, lasting frame of reference comprising a large number of cinema films: That is what is missing from cinemas and film culture here more than anything else. It is relatively worthless if a single old film can be seen in a cinema now and then, in among the latest releases; as worthless as a stuffed bird in the window of a boutique.”

At that time, Faerber longed for a situation in which, as if glancing up at the sky while out walking, one could spot a chirpy flock of birds in the cinemas, and among them there would also be silent films. Lively diversity.

EDUCATIONAL DUTY OR AN ADVENTURE?

Silent films are moving images recorded before 1930. The recordings were made without the corresponding sound on a translucent, easily inflammable and flexible strip and projected onto a screen in a dark room using a projector at different speeds, ranging from 16 to 24 images per second. These moving images found a home in our cinemas and their destiny in the audience’s reception. Frequently, silent films are also referred to as ‘old films’. But isn’t the term ‘old film’ completely misleading? Who would call Theodor Fontane’s Effi Briest, Thomas Mann’s Buddenbrooks or Franz Kafka’s America old books? Of course there are old books: printed works that are dog-eared, faded, and falling apart at the spine. When people refer to old books, they mean the material text carriers on which an author’s work was printed. So naturally Goethe’s Werther exists in old books, but also in quite new ones. No age can be attributed to Werther per se, surely. And thus every new edition of this book is also – as a matter of course – a new offer, and opens the way to a new experience. It is, as it should be, simply a book.
For a long time, terminology in the cinematic context was applied the other way around. A film by Fritz Lang, Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau or Georg-Wilhelm Pabst, a film with Emil Jannings, Louise Brooks or Marlene Dietrich was regarded as an old film from the outset: a more or less unusual hobby practiced by specialists; a peripheral group phenomenon; something that could lay claim to modest acknowledgement as protection of the species, but had no automatic right to existence. There was often an echoing suspicion that no pleasure was involved, and even some high priests of the true faith in silent film contributed to the sectarian atmosphere of its sacraments by demanding plenty of imaginary incense and suitably reverential participation. As a result, watching silent films seemed something of a necessary educational duty – as if one was compelled to come face to face with a crumbling, yellowed mummy.

Enno Patalas has always opposed this attitude. Patalas was a pioneer in the writing of German film history, director of the Munich Film Museum for almost 20 years, and is an internationally acknowledged expert in the reconstruction of silent films. “You never dive into the same film twice,” he says, varying a Chinese proverb, and colors his statement with a quotation from William Faulkner: “The past is never dead, it is not even past.” Even if they were recorded without sound, films are evidence of a former cultural technology, and a special reference to reality is inherent in them. They provide a link to reality that no other art form can achieve in this way – and silent films also convey this experience to their audience, no matter what the content of each individual film may be.

Part of silent film’s current topicality, inevitably, lies in the fact that it has been released from its unique place in the noblest diaspora of film history. The fact that we have begun to repatriate it among the flock of brightly-colored birds that constitutes cinema in its entirety.

**CINÉ-CONCERTS**

Unlike the situation ten or twenty years ago, today it is relatively easy to locate and attend a regular trickle of imaginative and yet seriously organized silent film screenings. Cinema Babylon in Berlin, for example, has been presenting regular silent film concerts since 2006. During these first two years, the cinema has realized a total of 100 events, either in the cinema itself or in special locations (open air, Berlin planetarium, or even a church). At the beginning of 2007, the cinema presented a report on the first year of the project, which was even considered bold by the initiators themselves. To their own delighted amazement, they were able to announce: “21 of the films (47 in all) shown last year (2006) belonged to the popular canon (for example *Pandora’s Box* (1929) directed by G.W. Pabst, with Louise Brooks in the leading role, and 26 to the categories of rarely shown (for example *Der Sonderling* (1929) by and with Karl Valentin) and very rarely shown...
films (for example *Die Blitzzentrale* (1921) by Valy Arnheim). There were two Berlin premieres, a German premiere and a world premiere of restored films. All with outstanding projection, live music, introduction and a program leaflet.

At the Babylon we had audiences of 4776, at the open-air events 1404, in the planetarium 313 and in the Apostelkirche 200. Two years ago, no one would have imagined such a thing possible.

The German press (*Hamburger Morgenpost*) certainly acclaimed the organizers of the silent film concerts as national players in the league of popular cultural events, and the Berlin BZ claimed that “silent film concerts are the latest trend”. German Films also presents ciné-concerts at many of its own Festivals of German Films around the world, with live musical accompaniment by the Aljoscha Zimmermann Trio.

Such enthusiasm can be topped only when the events take place in the open air. Of course open-air screenings have always been part of the cultural heritage in regions privileged with a warm climate, but meanwhile the combination of open air, silent film and concert has developed into a super trend for the metropolitan chill-out generation from New York to Budapest: now ciné-concerts in parks, on river banks or other locations with special flair form a mainstay against constant over-stimulus from the world of 3-D visions and laser shows.
THE SOUND OF SILENTS

Music plays a key role in silent films’ new popularity among the general public. And it is no coincidence that the representatives of New Music have played and continue to play an extremely active role in this “gentle dusting-off”, for in the aesthetic concepts of silent film they discovered a principle that corresponds astonishingly to their own efforts at abstraction and attempts to overcome mimesis and naturalism. New compositions or adaptations of silent film music by renowned composers ranging from Mauricio Kagel (Un chien andalou) to Henning Lohner (Orlacs Haende), Andras Hamary (Foolish Wives) and Michael Nyman (Der Mann mit der Kamera) have contributed considerably to an awareness of the modernity and innovative force of cinema’s early years – and the relevance of the past is emphasized particularly in a contemporary musical language.

In this context, the DVD edition with which world sales agent Transit and the Murnau Foundation breathed new life into Murnau’s opus magnum The Last Laugh in 2004 is quite exemplary: with this lavish restoration made from various copies scattered all over the world – the original version being lost – the initiators have helped develop a differentiated aura to the film, a clarity and quiet in its images that could probably only be admired at its world premiere over 80 years ago.
There were no compromises regarding the sound, either. As this silent film is almost entirely without intertitles, the film music plays an even bigger part. Detlev Glanert composed an addition to Guiseppe Becce’s vision – only passed on to us in a fragmentary form – that now constitutes an impressive symphonic commentary.

However, in the context of silent films and music, it is astonishing that the major classics are not necessarily the audience pleasers; it is the lesser known or rarely played works that have developed a certain reputation. And so the well-known German silent film pianist Stephan von Bothmer is delighted that audiences at his events have not succumbed, obviously, to the idea that the best-known are automatically the best.

**SILENCE SELLS**

To stay with *The Last Laugh*, the bonus documentation of this DVD provides expert insights for those who wish to inform themselves about the ingenious animation technique, the miniatures with manipulated perspectives, the living camera, the digital restoration and the exciting search for the original cutting version. The factual, sober style of this presentation makes it stand out positively among the overdone clips accompanying large-scale American productions. An additional bonus is the opportunity to listen to Hugo Riesenfeld’s alternative film music, which accompanied *The Last Laugh* at its premiere in the Criterion Cinema in New York.

The initial prejudice against DVDs – the belief that they would help destroy the growing interest in public screenings of silent films – was overcome long ago. Obviously, it is truer to say that considerable overlaps exist between those who attend cinema screenings and those who buy the corresponding DVDs: they prefer to catch the films twice rather than not at all. As statistics prove, the DVD is never a replacement for the fans of silent film, but a welcome supplement.

Occasionally, the television broadcaster ARTE is also active in the DVD publication of silent film productions. In 2001, it demonstrated its pioneering spirit by bringing out an ambitious box containing the films *Nanook of the North* by Robert Flaherty, Ernst Lubitsch’s *The Marriage Circle*, Augusto Genina’s *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and *The Thief of Baghdad* directed by Raoul Walsh. This was the first time that a DVD production in this field not only fulfilled, but also surpassed all expectancies with regard to image and sound quality, bonus material and booklet – as an overall publication, therefore. Since it started broadcasting in 1992, the German-French channel ARTE has sought to remind viewers regularly of the early years of film and to bring to light forgotten or lost treasures as
well. A specific dramaturgy of events and marketing has been established in this context: often the results of such expeditions into film and music history are presented in a first, lavish context that promises the development of great symbolic-cultural value, like the Berlinale or other film and music festivals, and later they experience their second premiere on ARTE, and a third via publication on DVD.

Thanks to the moral and financial commitment of ARTE, it has been possible to rediscover films that were long thought lost — like Meyer from Berlin by Ernst Lubitsch or Burning Soil by F. W. Murnau — and to reconstruct works like The White Hell of Pitz Palu by Arnold Fanck or The General Line by S.M. Eisenstein in their original, i.e. sometimes also tinted color versions.

Of course in the vast majority of cases, these restorations also include the development and production of accompanying music, because as already indicated — and this is one of the great revelations in connection with the renaissance of silent film — these films were seldom truly silent and sometimes, amazingly, they were even in color!

In this context, however Loy W. Arnold — managing director of Transit Film, which handles the international utilization rights to around 600 titles (not only from the era of silent film) — reminds us that all the people and institutions working with such commitment in this field are dependent on international exchange and above all on world-wide interest: “The necessary returns for our usually extremely costly enterprises can only be realized within an international framework. If we restricted ourselves to the German or even only to the European market, we would have to be content with DVD-sales of only three figures for many titles. However, if we also operate on the Japanese and American markets — where the interest in collectors’ products like ours is more widespread — the sales of our titles usually increase rapidly into the high thousands.”

METROPOLIS – AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE

One film that represents the German cinema of the twenties like no other experienced its premiere in Berlin on 10 January 1927: Metropolis, an UFA production by Fritz Lang, was not only a film of monumental buildings and impressive camera tricks, but also a project of monumental cost and one that required an impressive length of time to produce. An amalgamation of science fiction and melodrama, the story may have sounded banal even to contemporaries: an omnipotent captain of industry forces his workers to work harder and harder while the sons and daughters of the upper class devote themselves to the pursuit of pleasure. The setting is the gigantic city of Metropolis, which is threatened with destruction, however, because an offended scientist intends to seduce the workers to insubordination with the aid of the artificially created, mechanical ‘Maria’. Counterpart to the ‘evil’ agitator is her double, the kind-hearted laborer Maria, who preaches love and reconciliation to the workers.

“The story we are told here is trivial, bombastic, pedantic and overwhelmingly romantic,” Luis Buñuel noted as early as 1927 after he had seen the film in a Paris cinema, but the Spanish director also recognized that Metropolis could only be approached through its story to a very minor extent: “However, if one does not concentrate on the anecdote, but on the vividly three-dimensional, photogenic background, Metropolis surpasses all expectations, astonishing us like the most wonderful picture book that has ever been created.”

And this ‘wonderful picture book’ has continued to fascinate audiences to the present day. Indeed, it seems to fascinate people now more than ever: Metropolis is one of the absolute bestsellers among classic (or historical) DVDs. In the program of Transit Film, there can be no doubt that it is an unbeatable sales stimulus. A brief Google search is all that is necessary in order to find detailed information about the film’s second, third (or already ninth?) life.

The divided opinions about this film since its premiere, which threatened to make it into the “greatest ever, unsurpassable commercial catastrophes of German film” (Film-Illustrierte), have actually proven to be its most valuable trump card. Today’s division of opinion no longer concerns the rating of its plot, but whether the film can be regarded as the non-plus-ultra of German silent film, dismissing all other candidates, or whether it may also open the door to other films from the same period — as an appetizer, a work that stimulates further interest. This open question is passionately voiced by fans, but reflected to the same extent in more differentiated expert views.

Martin Koerber, film curator at the Deutsche Kinemathek, who discovered (in 1997) the original negative of the export version of Metropolis in the Federal Film Archives that was used as the basis for the film’s most lavish and enduring reconstruction, naturally shares the enthusiasm of all aficionados. In connection with this film in particular, however, he also unorthodoxly questions the reliability and binding nature of the accepted canon: “It only began to develop its current significance decades later. Of course that is also an argument against the customary practice of archiving. Naturally and inevitably, in archives there is also the issue of what is ‘worth archiving’. Films that are not considered worth archiving should be destroyed, or so the working instructions state, and there was actually a good chance that Metropolis would have fallen through the net as not worthy of archiving. So that means one has to reconsider repeatedly and very
carefully what should be done with a film that is categorized as lamentably poor, and without doubt, Metropolis is lamentably poor in many respects. But the film’s absolute quality, if there is such a thing at all, is not the aspect that interests us: we are interested in something different. Part of this, surely, is the fact that it functions like a message from the era in which it was made, perhaps one of the most informative messages in existence. Indeed, this quality as a messenger was also one of the reasons why it has been adopted – as the only film – into the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage.

Metropolis is also discussed over and over again in the relevant cyber-communities, as if it was a current blockbuster, and as an unprejudiced visitor to the corresponding forums or sites, one is rapidly compelled to admit surprise at the large number of people all over the world who feel called upon to act as testers of the film’s various editions. On www.areadvd.de, for example, after the DVD publication by Transit Film based on the work of Martin Koerber and Enno Patalas: “The gigantic pictorial worlds of the city are still visually impressive today and ought to astound even those skeptics who normally have no interest in silent films. On this DVD, the film can be found in its restored version for the first time. This is also the longest version that has been published from 1927 to the present day.”

And finally, also on www.areadvd.de, the technical verdict of skeptical fan Karsten Serck, expressed in a language that may justifiably be called ‘specialist’: “The master is only ‘window-boxed’ very slightly, which means it has been given a black frame around the image that alters it a little in places, but this is hardly likely to be noticeable due to the overscan. For this black and white film, the video-bit rate of 5.5 Mbps is adequate to avoid the creation of new digital defects in the image through compression, which would spoil the meticulous efforts of restoration. This makes it possible to receive a near unadulterated impression of the quality of the restoration from this DVD as well. Despite compression, the graininess of the image is preserved. The image is very quiet, with hardly any irregular motion. In this respect, Metropolis is even better than some contemporary films that have not been scanned with sufficient care. Thanks to digital technology, the clearly legible intertitles are almost motionless, like a still. The dropout and scratches, which were considerable in some places, have been 99% eliminated, and hardly any interference is now noticeable. Above all, it is astonishing how much detail the master still enables us to make out. In some places, certainly, you can see that the film material used did not have the same quality throughout, but overall the quality is very good for this age, and there are even some sequences with a sharpness of detail that almost meets the standard of more recent productions.”

Thus, although Metropolis may appear to be the synonym for the topicality of German silent film, one should recall that its success story only really began after a delay of three decades.

NOSFERATU: CONSTANTLY REVISITED, RELENTLESSLY REMADE

Not long ago, Indy Mogul (www.indymogul.com), a video podcast for young independent filmmakers, asked its subscribers which horror film they thought was the most important of all time: in first place, the up-and-coming independent filmmakers did not name John Carpenter’s Halloween or a current Stephen King adaptation, but Murnau’s Nosferatu, a silent film made in 1921. The old Nosferatu still resembles a message from the Olympus of international cinema. This first filming of the Gothic novel by Bram Stoker has been followed by innumerable versions; not least, Werner Herzog erected a personal memorial to the film with his remake Nosferatu the Vampyre in 1978.

The extent to which Murnau’s masterpiece still stimulates the imagination of filmmakers today is indicated by the film Shadow of the Vampire made by the American director Elias Merhige in 2000. This feature film recounts the filming of Murnau’s Nosferatu and attempts to suggest that the actor of the title role, Max Schreck, was a real vampire. And this was no minor project; after all, the main roles in the film were played by John Malkovich as F. W. Murnau and Willem Dafoe as Max Schreck. Horror specialist Tobe Hooper also paid trib-
ute to Murnau with *Salem's Lot* in 1979: here, a blue-print of the original *Nosferatu* haunts a small American town, only to infect its population with vampirism.

And its horrific fascination continues to exercise an impact through citation as well, for instance in Wes Craven's *Scream 2*. But these direct references are only an indication of the enduring, fundamental influence of *Nosferatu* on the genres of horror and fantasy film. On the occasion of the Murnau retrospective at the Berlinale in 2003, the German filmmaker and film critic Joerg Buttgereit posed the question: “Only a Movie?” and answered it himself by making the point that *Nosferatu* is so important to us, “because it identifies Germany as a birthplace of the horror film genre, much maligned since then.” Indeed, Tod Browning's wonderful *Dracula* starring Bela Lugosi from 1931, for example, would be inconceivable without the silent work from 1921: scenarios, camera angles and above all the
atmospheric lighting design are based on the model from Germany. Nosferatu thus had an influence on the design and genesis of an entire genre, since Browning’s Dracula and its success led to the development of an explicit visual style for horror films in the Hollywood studio Universal, and this has continued to shape the genre to the present day.

It is conceivable that a tradition of horror film could have developed in Germany as well, but the phenomenon that began with Nosferatu, The Student of Prague and also The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, with its powerful images of individual fear, did not suit the concept of National Socialist film after 1933. There, the emphasis was on distraction from everyday life. Buttgereit: “If the clean screens of the ‘Third Reich’ had not got in the way, we might have had a horror culture as deep-rooted as that of American cinema today. Murnau’s Nosferatu is evidence, so to speak, of a conceivable German horror film culture that never really spread.”

**GERMAN SILENT CINEMA – 100% EXPRESSIONIST?**

But the roots of horror film are not all that can be found in the German cinema of the twenties. Ufa and the independent film companies earned their money at cinema box offices with a wide range of genre films. In the words of Martin Koerber, film curator at the Deutsche Kinemathek: “Everyone who produced images at that time...
was a professional who referred to older pictorial traditions, e.g. those in painting. Of course, the cinema of the twenties is not Expressionist through and through, there were also quite cheerful commercial films, brightly-lit throughout, and there were films that were dark because they told crime stories ... Basically, it was — and of course it still is — a matter of getting through to good material — with the emphasis required in each case."

Despite the widespread commercial success of these genre productions, nevertheless it is primarily the image of an Expressionist cinema of hard shadows, two-dimensional sets and white made-up faces that shapes our impression of cinema in the Weimar Republic. Have we succumbed to a curious form of legend-creating? Martin Koerber agrees: "To a great extent, the notion that silent film is always hard and only black and white is due to a misconception and poor original material. The authors that wrote about it in the past drew their knowledge from very poor quality copies. Incredible theories emerged as a result of such sources, which should rather be called poor photocopies of photocopies of the sources. These theories concerning light and shade and Expressionism in German film have often survived to the present day. When one views good copies, none of this can be found, not even in The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari; there are no hard shadows there either, although it is true that the shadows were painted directly onto the wall. But it is filmed in a marvelously soft style otherwise."

BRINGING UP TO DATE & CONTEXTUALIZING

It seems that people are surprised and above all captivated by the innovativeness, even brilliance, of the artistic and sociological approaches in silent film, as long as the topic is successfully brought up to date or suitably contextualized. Initially, for instance, the theme of the Berlinale retrospective in 2006, "City Girls — Images of Women in Silent Film", was not regarded as especially original, but it proved to be one of the hits of that year’s Berlinale. In this context, Rainer Rother, the artistic director of the Deutsche Kinemathek, which is responsible for the annual retrospective of film history at the festival, explained: "We know that images of women changed radically from the 1910s to the 1920s, but there was also some continuity. Our selection of films attempted to bring both across to the audience. Our retrospective centered on the phenomenon of the 'new woman', whose image reflects the social changes of that era. The new female figures’ playful and challenging qualities, their mobility, their audacious expressions; these all interested us. It is a great pleasure to see how their undisturbed sparkle and great enthusiasm helped to upturn traditional models."

Besides the annual retrospectives at the Berlinale, there are also a number of international silent film festivals. The spectrum ranges from the USA (San Francisco Silent Film Festival) and Great Britain (British Silent Cinema in Nottingham), to the Netherlands (Filmmuseum Biennale in Amsterdam), Australia (Silent Film Festival in Hobart/Tasmania) and Japan (Kyoto Film Festival). In 1997, the
German film composer Guenther A. Buchwald was even honored in Japan with an opportunity to compose new music for the silent film *What Made Her Do It*? (1929) by the director Shigeyoshi Suzuki, which was then premiered as a ciné-concert at the gala opening of the 10th International Tokyo Film Festival.

Over the past 15 years, silent film festivals have developed from secrecy-clad meetings between representatives of a curious sect into cultish audience-pullers in the relevant regions or countries. As it was a pioneer in this field, one special example is “Le giornate del cinema muto” in the Northern Italian town of Pordenone, where top-quality master classes for film musicians are also organized. This part of the festival has developed into a cross-over event with international impact; a firm date in their annual diary for most German silent film musicians from Aljoscha Zimmermann and Juergen Kurz to Peter Gottwald and Guenter A. Buchwald.

In addition, top-quality colloquia take place in Pordenone, conceived as enthusiastic dialogues between veterans and 12 young fellowship-holders each year – intensive work to support the up-and-coming generation. As Luca Giuliani, who is responsible for the workshops, emphasizes: “The object of these dialogues is not only to elicit information and instruction, but to establish personal, social connection between collegians and Pordenone habitues, so that the former will have no inhibitions about approaching the latter, in the course of the week, for supplementary discussion.”

**OF SKYSCRAPERS, BELLADONNAS & INVENTORS**

In the past decade, contemporary filmmakers in Germany have made several interesting attempts to investigate the early days of their medium. These projects’ diversity of ambition and style enables us to conclude that the era of silent film – a period of around 35 years, after all – is no longer seen as a monolithic block, but that a fine awareness of the wealth of facets in this epoch has developed. Preferences and dislikes are played out with cheerful presumption, for example in Andreas Krein’s prize-winning short film homage *Nuts & Bolts* from 2003. Krein’s film, produced during his studies at the Film Academy Baden-Wuerttemberg, represents a remarkably easy game with action and image patterns from the glorious era of slapstick comedies: On the construction site of a steel-framed skyscraper in the New York of the late twenties, lunchtime is announced by a siren. The workers’ break takes place on a steel girder at a dizzying height. However, the uncertain peace among the men is disturbed when an apprentice steals his master’s sandwiches. His own lunchbox is empty because he has turned it into a home for his pet frog. But the robbery is discovered, and to crown it all, the frog also escapes from its prison; a breath-taking chase between master, apprentice and frog ensues in the lofty heights – including some daring manoeuvres, acrobatic cliff-hangers and a surprising meal. The background to the action, i.e. the city extending to the horizon, was developed entirely by computer. An urban environment of 30,000 houses was ‘constructed’ on the computer using the director’s own pre-vis designs and a library of window and wall textures. Apart from the actors, in reality there was no more than a six-meter long dummy steel-girder made of wood in
front of the camera. Ten days of shooting in the Bluescreen Studio were followed by more than a year of digital post-production. In the meantime, Nuts & Bolts has enjoyed an impressive international career, receiving a Special Mention in the international short film competition at the Venice International Film Festival and the Short Tiger Award at the Munich Film Festival. In addition, it was honored with a gala screening in the New York Museum of Modern Art.

Another debut: In 2005, the internationally celebrated German film actress Franka Potente (Run Lola Run, Blow, The Bourne Identity) returned to Germany for her debut as a director on a film that was largely silent, and black and white: Digging for Belladonna.

Her work was premiered in the Perspectives German Cinema section at the Berlinale in 2006 and tells a rather bizarre story of the love between the daughter of a reputable but impoverished family at the end of the First World War and a punk from the 21st century. In a very intelligent way, Franka Potente’s film pinpoints something that is experienced by every filmgoer after seeing a film that is 70 or 80 years old: the images, the stories come alive, they become present – and as long as the magic of the film continues, there is no difference between here and now, between the past and today.

Digging for Belladonna is a declaration of love to the cinema. Frame fade-outs end the scenes, fixed camera positions capture the restless action, and the protagonist’s mouth is a red heart-shape in her white powdered face – the ideal of beauty represented by film divas a hundred years ago. In addition, there is a substantial pinch of Lubitsch: doors behind which the unmentionable takes place, curtains that reveal more than they conceal, husbands caught out, and angry elderly ladies in full-length nightdresses. Above all, this is a comedy that allows itself to have fun with old films without making fun of them.

Wim Wenders had already set about investigating the genesis and origins of his profession in 1995, as part of activities to mark the hundredth birthday of film. His documentary film A Trick of the Light reconstructs the history and impact of the first public film projection in the world, which took place in Berlin in 1895. Together with some students from the Munich University of Television & Film, Wenders investigated the story of film pioneers Max and Emil Skladanowsky and translated it into a cinematic narrative. To do so, he selected the perspective of a young girl, whose curiosity brings the narrative forward. At the same time, this girl is the alter ego of an elderly contemporary witness, the daughter of the main protagonist Max Skladanowsky. The camera therefore always watches the work of the three brothers from the level of the table top. Wenders and his students even reproduced the emotions and problem-solving of the Berlin showmen Skladanowsky down to details such as the shoelace eyelets used to reinforce the perforation holes of the first film strip. The film’s special attraction lies in Wenders’ use of a camera from the early twenties to shoot the acted sequences. Today’s viewer can thus judge the quality attainable with those relatively simple recording devices, even down to the niceties of contrast.

WORSHIPPING THE ASHES OR CARRYING THE FLAME?

In the context of the Murnau retrospective at the Berlinale in 2003, Wim Wenders wrote of Murnau’s film Phantom (1923): “Murnau was light years ahead of his time. Film language would take a long time to reach the point where he wanted it. And even he himself had not arrived at the place he wanted to be. Murnau died too soon, certainly. But was he also born too soon? The way he wanted to tell us things with Phantom – it simply wasn’t possible at that time! And sometimes what he did manage to convey is incredible. Take the whole passage entitled ‘Der taumelnde Tag’, for instance. It ought to be played as a loop in all shopping centers when they are open on Sundays, as an apotheosis of the spending spree. The way Lorenz spends his money in that sequence is unbeatable, even today.”

Film history, that much is certain, is not a matter of worshipping the ashes, but of carrying on the flame – something that is very much alive!

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The director, who also wrote the screenplay, took a long look at film history before making her film. She reminds us that Ernst Lubitsch had already conjured the curse of the mummy in The Eyes of the Mummy Mâ as early as 1918, and that even erotic cinema enjoys a tradition dating back to the beginnings of cinematography.
Leander Haussmann was born in 1956 in Quedlinburg. He originally trained as a printer before entering acting school in 1982 at the Berliner Hochschule fuer Schauspielkunst ‘Ernst Busch’. He then performed in Gera, Parchim and Weimar, where he also worked as a director. In 1996, Germany’s then youngest theater director played Germany’s then youngest prison governor in Detlev Buck’s *Männerpension*. Later, Haussmann played on the big stages of Frankfurt, Munich and Berlin. At the start of the 1995/1996 theatrical season, Haussmann assumed the directorship of the Bochum Spielhaus, a post which he held until 2000. After he stood before Detlev Buck’s cameras a second time, in 1998’s *Liebe Deine Naechste!*, he made his own cinema directorial debut with the subsequently much applauded – by critics as well as viewers – comedy, *Sun Alley* (Sonnenallee). In 2000 he received a German Film Award in Silver (Best Film) and the Variety Critics’ Choice Award for Best German Film. In 2003 he directed his adaptation of Sven Regener’s novel, *Herr Lehmann*, again for the cinema. Two years later, he directed Schiller’s *Kabale und Liebe* for television, as well as *NVA* (which won the DIVA Award 2006 for Best Direction), the last part of his Osttrilogy. His last film, *Warum Mäenner nicht zuhoeren und Frauen schlecht einparken*, was Nr. 1 in the German charts on its opening weekend at the end of November 2007. He has currently just wrapped post-production on another feature, *Robert Zimmermann wundert sich ueber die Liebe* (scheduled for release in 2008). His next project is a new version of the German classic *Lena Barrocke*, with the working title *Dinosaurier*.

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“I wanted to draw comics as a child,” Haussmann begins, who found himself, following school, in a low level printing job. “It was the biggest disappointment in my life. No art, just a three shift system. So I wanted to be an actor but had no talent. But then along came military service, in the navy.”

After doing his bit to defend the GDR, Haussmann founded a theater group in the East Berlin bohemian scene, “which was a big thing in the early 1980s. We did street theater since we were not allowed to act indoors! The Stasi noticed us, because when I applied to acting school I saw they hadn’t given me their stamp of approval – literally! I’m still puzzled how I got in! Maybe someone thought it the best way to get me under control!” Acting school proved as disappointing as printing, but a move to Gera and an encounter with director Frank Castdorf “gave me belief in acting and the theater.”

There then followed a convoluted tale of mobbing, the Stasi, good friend Uwe trying to burn the GDR flag and firing an imaginary machine gun at the Soviet military, secret police raids, sex with ballet dancers, and Haussmann telling the audience at a children’s play that a character would not eat a paper tree until Uwe was released! “After which, I went to Parchim and became a director.”

That lasted until Haussmann was begged to leave after having a
Volkspolizist do an onstage striptease to the Rolling Stones’ Honky Tonk Woman. That, and having GDR leader Erich Honecker’s favorite song playing on a trumpet, badly. Attending the subsequent disciplinary meeting the next day in pajamas (“I was at home sleeping!”) didn’t help. Nor did kicking the door in! Haussmann was on the move again!

This time, the man who does a great impression of, well, a cuddly giant teddy bear, ended up at the Deutsche Nationaltheater in Weimar as an actor. “Then I became a director. I did fifty shows of all sizes, all main houses throughout Germany. But then I began to get bored. I was repeating myself. I was earning money and the lifestyle was pleasant, but I didn’t like myself anymore. Critics noticed I was going in circles but one is not so ready to recognize it oneself.”

Then Haussmann met Detlev Buck. “He was writing Maennerpension and found me very interesting, filmically. He wrote the role of the prison governor for me. The film’s producer called and asked if I wanted to make a film about everyday GDR life.” The result was Sun Alley and the start of a lasting collaboration.

“It’s never uncomplicated,” Haussmann says. “Sometimes it’s successful, other times it isn’t. But it’s always fertile, never mainstream, never boring. I was allowed to make films as I wanted. Herr Lehmann is about beer drinking and nothing else! But the themes of loneliness and betrayal are there. I always use understatement, never a raised index finger and moralizing.”

Anyone he hasn’t yet depicted? “I’ve never managed, not in film or theater, to show a real asshole!” Haussmann replies. “I’d love to. I like figures and characters I feel sorry for. Although I’m not sorry they’re assholes! Take NVA. Army films need assholes! But I suddenly start understanding even these people and I switch in favor of understanding the character to the detriment of the tension and drama. I’m not sorry but it’s like an illness you can’t get rid of. There’s nothing sadder than someone who’s spent thirty years believing in an army that’s no longer there. The worst thing is the realization that life was in vain. I served in a meaningless military!”

Haussmann feels himself “well and fairly treated by audiences. It’s just a pity my films come out after the Berlinale! I also think juries don’t do enough for entertaining films. Comedy is the one adequate possibility to mobilize people because laughing is interactive. A hearty laugh stays in the memory.”

In terms of his filmmaking, Haussmann is character driven. “I very much envy Blake Edwards and others who develop figures, or James Bond as a character. I love watching US TV series. King of Queens, Grey’s Anatomy, Prison Break, House M.D. They have unbelievably brave characters. It can never hurt to have a main character with as many negative qualities as possible. They are negative, cynical, sometimes really sick, insecure but also very funny and witty.”

What would Haussmann do with the proverbial $200m from Hollywood? “I don’t know,” he answers. “Lots of horses and swords, maybe. A friend told me he’s always keen to see when I’ll have a weapon in my film. But I would be more interested in where it came from!”

We then rush out of Detlev Buck’s office and head for the editing suite. Haussmann’s latest film, Robert Zimmermann wundert sich uber die Liebe, is in post-production and a brainwave has just struck! It involves juxtaposing Robert and his significantly older flame with a teenage couple sitting next to them on the same park bench in order to emphasize the embarrassment.

“I am always looking for new possibilities of expression,” Haussmann explains. “I wanted to make the scene harder for the two of them and also more poetic. It’s an old situation. They sit on the bench and the young couple is almost dubbing Robert and the woman. I’m always proud of these special kinds of solutions.”

For Haussmann, “film must always have a large percentage of optimism. It’s too easy to show people from the negative and depressing side. I think it is impolite to confront other people, to annoy them, with your own depression. My next film is about death, but shows the beauty of getting old, and the necessity of inevitable death. But I plan to show it with charm and humor to put some of the fear to rest. To have fun with it. There is a supporting character in a retirement home. As children we wanted to be adults, as adults we long to be children, now we can be treated as children because we’re old: he loves getting his nappy put on! The main character is a punctuality freak and plans to take the suicide pill in Switzerland when he’s eighty. He also plans to rob a bank!”

And then he’s up and headed for the editing suite again, to try out something else that’s just occurred to him.

Simon Kingsley spoke with Leander Haussmann
After studying German, Theater and Communication Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich, Ute Wieland graduated in Directing from the University of Television & Film (HFF). During her time at the HFF from 1980 to 1984, she directed two shorts, acted in films by Sherry Hormann and Michael Bentele, and served as a screenwriter and DoP on projects by Hormann and Volker Arend. Ute Wieland’s graduation film Tango im Bauch (1985) won the City of Munich’s Film Support Prize and was shown at such festivals as Venice and Turin. Her second feature The Year of the Turtle (Im Jahr der Schildkroete, 1988) received a nomination for Best Film at the 1989 German Film Awards where the Best Actor award went to lead actor Heinz Bennent. A year later, the film’s lead actress Karina Fallenstein received the Best Actress award at the Ophuels Festival in Saarbruecken. In the following years, Wieland worked as a director on episodes of TV series and several TV movies, including Eiskalte Freunde, Italiener und andere Süßigkeiten and the two-parter Miss Texas. In 2005, she returned to the cinema with the “instant remake” FC Venus – Women with Balls which was produced by Hamburg-based Wueste Filmproduktion and released in German cinemas by NFP/20th Century Fox in spring 2006. This summer saw Wieland directing her fourth feature, Freche Mädchen, written by Maggie Peren based on the bestseller by Bianka Minte Koenig, for Munich-based Collina Film, which will be released in German cinemas by Constantin Film in 2008. She is currently working on the screenplay of the historical drama Alma. Her other films include: Rosi und Edgar (1982, short) and Talente (1983, short).

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“It’s a bit like coming back to my roots,” says film and TV director Ute Wieland about the fact that she is developing a couple of film projects where she would again be penning the screenplays herself.

Directing from her own screenplays was how the graduate of the Munich University of Television & Film began with her graduation film Tango im Bauch and the award-winning second feature The Year of the Turtle.

In the following years when she worked as a director on series and TV movies for German television, Ute Wieland was always working from scripts delivered by other authors. “There were often very good scripts and I just wanted to direct and have some continuity,” she recalls. “That’s something television gave me whereas with film projects it takes so much longer.”

“When I read a script I have to fall in love with it immediately,” she adds, citing David Lean, Billy Wilder and the Coen brothers as filmmakers who inspire her. “The great thing about working for television is that it allowed me to work in many kinds of genres and to further develop my craft as a filmmaker – so that I can now say today: the story is the decisive thing for me because I can then express myself cinematically in many genres and serve the story. The work for television enabled me to do this. I was able to make an episode of
Polizeiruf 110 – Hetzjagd, starring Angelica Domröse, in 1999 and a Tatort episode Fettkiller, based on a screenplay by Andreas Schlüter and Mario Giordano as well as comedies and thrillers. I don’t like tying myself down to a particular genre because the story is always very important to me.”

However, Ute Wieland made her return to cinema in 2005 with the “instant remake” FC Venus which was produced by Hamburg-based Wueste Filmproduktion. “I have been a part of the Wueste ‘family’ and have known them for ten years,” she notes. “It was really overdue that we should work together and of course it helped that we are all football fans!”

As she points out, the screenplay by Jan Berger with the Finnish original authors Katri Manninen and Outi Keskevaari was “very accomplished and I would even say that the adaptation is much better than the Finnish original. In our German version, we had more comedy in the conflict between the women and men on and off the pitch.”

Clearly, thanks to this production which was released by NFP/20th Century Fox in German cinemas in spring 2006, Ute Wieland came back on to the radar for many German film producers. One of them – Uli Limmer of Munich-based Collina Film – had already been looking for some time for the right project to offer her.

When he suggested an adaptation of Bianka Minte Koenig’s best-selling book series Freche Maedchen with a screenplay by writer-director Maggie Peren, Wieland didn’t hesitate for a second “because I am a great fan of Maggie’s and love her sense of humor.”

She explains that this teenage film about the first kiss and first love affair among 14-year-old girls draws elements from the three Freche Maedchen books, but admits that “casting the girls was much harder than I imagined it would be. These changes from child to teenage girl happen so quickly that we literally had hundreds of girls to see. They were either too young or too old.” The finished film is scheduled to be released by Constantin Film in mid-July.

At the same time, one couldn’t get any further from Freche Maedchen with one of her next projects where she is writing the screenplay herself: the historical drama Alma which is based on the love story of her mother on the shores of the Black Sea over two generations. “I see it as a kind of European Gone with the Wind and could imagine it being structured either as a German or a European co-production. It will be a new genre for me because The Year of the Turtle was a drama and a chamber piece, whereas this one will have epic proportions,” she says.

Ute Wieland spoke with Martin Blaney
“It had been something Fatih had been planning to do for a long time,” says Klaus Maeck about Hamburg-based filmmaker Fatih Akin’s decision with producer/TV director Andreas Thiel to set up their own production outfit Corazón International in 2003.

Corazón was established during the production of Akin’s Head-On, which was made as a co-production with Wueste Film, with the goal of handling the filmmaker’s own projects in the future as well as those of other screenwriters and directors.

“From the outset, the choice of our company’s name Corazón was made to show that we didn’t see ourselves as a purely German or Turkish one,” Maeck recalls. “That’s why we chose this international name which means “heart” in Spanish. Our motto is that in the selection of the projects to produce, the heart decides and there should also be a social relevance. This applies whether they are music documentaries or genre films because we want to make films that express something and move us. We want to produce films that we would ourselves like to see in the cinema.”

The success of Corazón’s first productions would seem to show that they are on the right track: to begin with, Head-On won numerous awards in 2004 including the Berlinale’s Golden Bear, five Lolas, the European Film Awards’ Best European Film of the Year and Best European Director People’s Choice Award. The music documentary Crossing the Bridge – a co-production with Intervista Digital Media – was presented in a special screening at the Cannes Film Festival in 2005 when Akin was a member of the International Jury. Corazón’s first project by a filmmaker other than Akin was Turkish director Oezer Kiziltan’s award-winning feature debut Takva – A Man’s Fear of God. Akin’s fifth feature The Edge of Heaven (Auf der anderen Seite) was invited to the Official Competition of the 2007 Cannes Film Festival where it won the Screenplay Award and the Ecumenical Jury’s Prize. Since then, the film has received the European Parliament’s Lux Award, the North German Film Award in the category of Best Feature Film at the Nordic Film Days in Luebeck, the Lino Brocka Award in Manila, five awards in Antalya, and the European Screenwriter prize at the European Film Awards in December 2007. Takva and The Edge of Heaven were submitted in autumn 2007 by Turkey and Germany respectively for the Best Foreign Language Film category for the 2008 Academy Awards. Corazón’s other productions include: Chiko (dir: Oezguer Yildirim, 2008), F. Akin: Diary of a Film Traveller (dir: Monique Akin, doc, 2007), Garbage in the Garden of Eden (Der Muell im Garten Eden, dir: Fatih Akin, doc, in production), Uomini D’Onore (Men of Honor, dir: Francesco Sbano, doc, in production), and Soul Kitchen (in development).

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**Takva**, which was a big box office success in Turkey. The allegory for the clash between modernism and religion won nine prizes at the Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival in 2006, the FIPRESCI Critics Award at the 2007 *Panorama* of the Berlinale, and the Heart of Sarajevo Main Prize at the Sarajevo Film Festival last August.

Spring 2007 also saw Corazón produce *Chiko*, the feature debut by another Hamburg-based filmmaker, Ozguzer Yildirim, starring Denis Moschitto and Moritz Bleibtreu as petty gangsters in a contemporary Hamburg suburb, which has its world premiere in the *Panorama* section of the Berlinale 2008.

Moreover, after making the music documentary *Crossing the Bridge* in 2005, expectations were running high last year on Akin’s first feature film after *Head-On*, *The Edge of Heaven*, which Corazón produced at locations in Germany and Turkey with co-producers Anka Film and Dorje Film.

“These expectations didn’t just come from outside, there was also an inner pressure,” Akin observed after the film was invited to the Official Competition of the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. “I wanted to make a better film, one that was more exciting and cinematic than *Head-On*.”

For Akin, *The Edge of Heaven* was “the philosophical and political sequel to *Head-On* and a very personal film” and is intended as the second part of Akin’s planned trilogy of Love, Death & The Devil.

Since its premiere in Cannes – where it won the Screenplay Award and the Ecumenical Jury’s Prize – *The Edge of Heaven* has traveled the international festival circuit and picked up its fair share of prizes and distinctions, ranging from the European Parliament’s LUX Award and the European Screenwriter 2007 prize at the 20th European Film Awards through the Lino Brocka Award in Manila to five awards at the Antalya Film Festival, among others.

In addition, the film has done well in the cinemas where it has been released so far: in Germany, distributor Pandora has taken over €2.6 million at the box office and sold over 400,000 tickets, while over 80,000 cinemagoers went to see the film on its opening weekend in France and it was approaching the 200,000 mark for distributor Pyramide after two weeks. In Turkey, *The Edge of Heaven* had clocked up over 65,000 admissions over the first weekend.

And, US indie distributor Strand Releasing picked the film up for North American distribution after previously releasing *Head-On* and *Crossing the Bridge* into the cinemas there.

What’s more, Corazón is in the enviable position of being involved in two films which were submitted for the Best Foreign Language Film category at the 2008 Academy Awards: *The Edge of Heaven* by Germany and *Takva* by Turkey.

As Klaus Maack points out, “the success with invitations to festivals and the prizes means that our work is noticed on an international level. It is a wonderful confirmation of what we are doing, but also a challenge to be even better next time.”

He admits that Akin’s high profile after *Head-On* and now *The Edge of Heaven* has generated considerable interest from both the US and Turkey in working with him or offering projects, “but we don’t want to commit ourselves to any specific direction. Each film has to be special in and of itself and the story is always what matters for us.”

This diversity is reflected in Corazón’s decision to be a partner on the Italian documentary *Uomini D’Onore* by Francesco Sbano, or Serbian filmmaker Moma Mrdakovic’s *Mamarosh* which will be made with Serbian and Hungarian partners in Belgrade, Hamburg, New York and Budapest from this spring. A blend of black comedy and road movie, the film follows a middle-aged man living with his mother in Belgrade who is prompted to leave the country and pursue the American dream when the NATO starts bombing the city in 1999.

Although Akin was busy with accompanying *The Edge of Heaven* to festivals and banging the drum for the OSCAR nominations in the past few months, he hasn’t been resting on his laurels.

Even before *The Edge of Heaven* went to Cannes, Akin was turning his attention to the docu-thriller *Garbage in the Garden of Eden* set in the mountain village of Camburnu on the Black Sea which is in the final scene of the Cannes competition film.

“I have begun the initial research, which has been very emotional and dramatic, about this village’s struggle against the Turkish state to build a waste dump on the mountain,” Akin explained, describing the film as being “in the classic documentary tradition like *Nanook of the North*. I will be documenting this battle for this piece of paradise, but there is a lot more going on between the lines.”

Moreover, he will now be getting down to work on the third and final part of the Love, Death & The Devil trilogy which Maack describes as a “big migration drama which will travel from Germany to America. Fatih calls it his Western and part of it would have to be shot in a studio. We first have to do all the research and get the financing together, so the film could probably go into production in 2009.”

*Martin Blaney spoke with Klaus Maack*
Standing on the sidelines of a film set at her house outside Munich one summer gave the young Hannah Herzsprung her first acquaintance with the world of acting. It was an experience that was to change her life although she didn’t know it at the time.

“One unconsciously, I was part of all of this for two months,” she recalls. “I was so fascinated by the production at work and, above all, by the actors and the director. There was a young girl my age in the lead role and I realized that I was wanting to act along as well and tried to say her lines.”

One might be forgiven for thinking that Hannah would have had a quicker entree into the world of acting since her father is an actor, “but I never understood what he really did except for that he was always away a lot.”

When she tried to persuade her father to help her get into acting, his reaction was to say that school was more important. Hannah, however, had been well and truly bitten by the acting bug and went to a casting call without her parents’ knowledge – and was given the role of Mimi in the TV series Aus heiterem Himmel where she stayed for two years. She followed this with various minor parts in such TV movies as Dennis Satin’s Das boese Maedchen and Tim Trageser’s Emilia – Die zweite Chance as well as in TV series like SOKO SF13. In 2005, Hannah made her feature film acting debut in Chris Kraus’ Four Minutes (Vier Minuten) and since then has worked with such directors as Alain Gsponer, Nicolai Rohde, Uli Edel, and Rudolf Thome. She gained experience of acting in English for the first time in the autumn and winter of 2007 on Stephen Daldry’s adaptation of Bernhard Schlink’s bestseller The Reader. Her portrayal of a talented pianist and prison inmate in Four Minutes earned her a Bavarian Film Award for Best Newcomer Actress at the beginning of 2007 as well as the Bunte readership’s New Faces Award. She subsequently picked up two nominations for the German Film Awards – Best Actress for Four Minutes and Best Supporting Actress for her role in Gsponer’s Life Actually (Das Wahre Leben) – and came away from the awards in May with a Golden Lola for her performance in the latter film. In October, Hannah traveled to the Hamptons International Film Festival to accept the Rising Stars Award and also received the 2007 Undine Award in the category of Best Young Lead Actress for Four Minutes. Apart from her feature film roles, this year also saw her play Liesl Karlstadt opposite Johannes Herrschmann in Jo Baier’s TV movie Karl Valentin & Liesl Karlstadt, produced by Hofmann & Voges Entertainment. Her other films include Solo (short, dir: Burkhard Feige, 2004), Der Tiger im Kaefig (short, dir: Katarina Eyssen, 2006), Berlin – 1. Mai (dir: Sven Taddicken and others, 2007), 10 Sekunden (dir: Nicolai Rohde, 2007), Der Baader Meinhof Komplex (dir: Uli Edel, 2008), and Pink (dir: Rudolf Thome, 2008). Hannah was selected by an international jury to represent Germany in the European Film Promotion’s annual ‘Shooting Stars’ presentation at the 2008 Berlinale.

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“I JUST WANT TO ACT”
two years while continuing her studies at school.

“I gained a lot of experience in those two years and worked with many different directors, but when the series came to an end, I promised my parents and myself that I would now finish my schooling and went to a boarding school in England for two years,” Hannah continues.

During her time in England she had a chance to act in school plays, but longed for the chance to return to acting in front of the camera. “Initially, it was very hard when I came back to Germany and I worked for a while behind the camera as an editorial assistant and production assistant,” she says. It was when she moved to Vienna to begin studying Communication Studies at the university that Hannah then had more time to develop her budding acting career.

Over the next few years, she had various minor parts in such TV movies as Dennis Satin’s Das boese Madchen and Tim Trageser’s Emilia – Die zweite Chance as well as such TV series as SOKO 5113, 18 – Allein unter Madchen, Im Namen des Gesetzes and Tramitz & Friends.

Then, in 2005, Hannah made her feature film acting debut with the lead role as the murderer Jenny in Chris Kraus’ Four Minutes. “It was the greatest challenge for me as an actress to play a part which is far away from me personally,” she recalls.

“It is incredible what can happen to you if you really want something,” she adds, commenting on the ‘little white lie’ told at the casting call about her proficiency as a pianist. “I hadn’t done this consciously to make it easier for myself to get the part. I just wanted it so much that at that moment I myself believed that I could really play. Clearly, the three hours of piano lessons I had when I was six years old were not sufficient. When I got the part and it came out that I couldn’t in fact play the piano, that gave me even more of a desire to prove to Chris and myself that I would learn as good as I can.”

Having such a long period to prepare was a godsend for this particularly complex role in Four Minutes. “I would be happy if I could have so much time to prepare with each film,” Hannah says, adding that she had always felt in good hands with director Kraus. “Chris was always there to give support to us actors. We rehearsed so much and didn’t start shooting until we were really certain. It was the first time where I had the feeling that this is what acting is meant to be, where demands were made of us.”

After completing Four Minutes, Hannah’s next feature film project was Alain Gsponer’s Life Actually where her performance as Florina garnered her the Best Supporting Actress prize at the 2007 German Film Awards last May.

When asked how she makes the decision about certain roles over others, Hannah says that she relies on “a gut feeling”: “I read the screenplay and then it has to happen, I have to get a feeling that it will be interesting or exciting to play or I see a part as being a challenge.”

What is certain is that she was not idle in 2007 since she has appeared in six productions over the past twelve months: Nicolai Rohde’s 10 Sekunden, Uli Edel’s Der Baader Meinhof Komplex, Jo Baier’s TV movie Karl Valentin & Liesl Karlstadt, Stephen Daldry’s The Reader, Berlin - 1. Mai (opening this year’s Perspectives German Cinema at the Berlinale) and her second lead with the title role in Rudolf Thome’s Pink – and further roles in other projects are being lined up for the coming months in 2008.

As Hannah explains, she is happy to be cast in supporting roles on productions like 10 Sekunden or Der Baader Meinhof Komplex “because I can then try things out, be there and follow the rest of the production without having the full responsibility I would if I was in a main part.”

Moving between cinema and television does not pose a problem for her either, if the project offers her an interesting part. Last year, she had the chance to work on her first historical drama with the Bavarian director Jo Baier on Karl Valentin & Liesl Karlstadt. “The part of Liesl Karlstadt was an enormous challenge for me, playing her from the ages 19 to 42. The screenplay by Ruth Toma is from Liesl’s perspective and focuses on the relationship between the two; it was a very romantic, tragic love story. Another challenge was to try and bring Valentin’s sketches back to life, but, as Hannah says, “Jo explained that we were not wanting to make a copy, but rather to create something of our own.”

Meanwhile, Hannah jumped at the chance when an invitation came for a casting call from the British director Stephen Daldry for his The Reader, the adaptation of Bernhard Schlink’s bestselling novel. This is her first role in an English-language production – in a small part as the daughter of Ralph Fiennes’ character Michael.

The US-German production may be on a bigger scale than what she has been used to on her previous projects, but “the work in itself is the same,” she notes. “It is a bit like Four Minutes in that we rehearse a lot. The work is very detailed and intensive and we don’t stop shooting until everything is in the can. You can also see from the way Stephen Daldry works with the actors that his background is in the theater.”

Only time will tell whether The Reader will become the first in a long line of international projects for the talented young actress, but Hannah is keen to keep her feet firmly on the ground. “I am naturally interested in international projects, but I will always choose my projects according to the script and part. It doesn’t matter whether it is a big or small project, national or international, I just want to act. That’s what it is all about for me.”

Hannah Herzsprung spoke with Martin Blaney
8TH ANNUAL FFA SHORT TIGER

Once again, fans of German short films were pleased with the films on offer: in November 2007, the FFA Short Tiger Award was presented in a common event with the German Short Film Award at the ‘Konrad Wolf’ Academy of Film & Television in Potsdam-Babelsberg. Two students from the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg received the award endowed with €25,000 in prize money: Jan-Marcel Kuehn and Matthias Scharfi fulfilled not only the basic requirements of being shorter than 5 minutes with their animated short Geschwisterliebe, but also convinced the jury of director Tomy Wigand, producer and writer Philipp Weinges and FFA-CEO Peter Dinges with their loving composition, harmonious lighting and precise camera angles. A Special Mention prize of €5,000 went to Meike Fehre of the Academy of Media Arts (KHM) in Cologne for her film Schlüsselkind. This year’s jury was unanimous: films of this quality are in great demand in order to achieve the goal of once again programming short films as supporting films in German cinemas.

SHORT FILMS EXPAND CINEMA AT THE BERLINALE

To underline the potential of short films as the center of cinematographic innovation, the Berlinale Talent Campus, Berlinale Shorts and the Forum Expanded is putting short film in the spotlight for one whole evening on 11 February 2008, starting with a panel featuring renowned professionals, such as the award-winning filmmaker Matthias Mueller, followed by a pitching where short film institutions can present their work. Afterwards there will be a meet-and-greet for festival delegates, short film buyers and distributors as well as filmmaking talents, before the evening concludes with a screening showcase of international short films.

Representing German short films on a national and international level, the German Short Film Association (AG Kurzfilm) is also present at the Berlinale. With its stand under the auspices of German Films, it provides information and contacts on all questions regarding German short films, including the new short film catalogue German Short Films 2008.
BAVARIA IN ANTALYA

In the fall of 2007, the 44th Golden Orange Film Festival and the 3rd International Eurasia Film Festival in Antalya again attracted many cineastes from all over the world. Traditionally the film festival opens up a forum for German film. This year’s program included several films funded by FFF Bayern, among them Fata Morgana by Simon Gross, How To Cook Your Life by Doris Doerrie and To the Limit by Pepe Danquart. A retrospective of four works by Rainer Werner Fassbinder and a Fassbinder exhibition were also part of the festival’s selection.

On occasion of the “Bavarian Film Day” the Bavarian State Chancellery and FFF Bayern hosted a reception to honor the work of the International Eurasia Film Festival and its interest in German movies as well as to provide a contact platform for German and Turkish producers. Members of the Bavarian delegation included State Minister Eberhard Sinner, FFF-CEO Klaus Schaefer, Fata Morgana—director Simon Gross and producer Fritjof Hohagen (Enigma Film), Kirsten Hager and Eric Moss, producers of To the Limit, as well as world sales representatives Sylvia Edelmann (ARRI Media Worldsales), Stefanie Fritz (Bavaria Media), Paula Ewert and Marcus Mittmeyer (Bavarian State Chancellery), Turkish/German producer and DoP Kenan Ormanlar (Kentel Film/Kenmovie), distributor Adil Kaya (Sanartfilm) and Ayten Akyildiz, festival director Filmfestival Turkey/Germany in Nuremberg.

BLITZFILM FESTIVAL CHINA 2007

The first Blitzfilm Festival entered into unknown territory. It was not the first time that programs of German short films had been shown in China, but it was a premiere with respect to direct collaboration between the German film scene and the booming cultural scene in China. The independent collective of artists House-M-Commune cultivates a network of contacts to the independent scene, as well as to universities, galleries and museums. These contacts represented the basis for this year’s Blitzfilm Festival tour, with events in Chongqing, Shanghai and Suzhou. A total of 41 films were shown in four program blocks, including Energie! by Thorsten Fleisch, Der Bettläufer by Ingo Schiller and Stephan-Flint Mueller, Mammal by Astrid Rieger and Whirr by Timo Katz.

The House-M-Commune described the Chinese cultural scene as enjoying a surfeit of classical fine art – astronomical prices are being paid in particular for paintings – while the fields of film and contemporary music are completely underdeveloped. So the Blitzfilm Festival was preaching to the converted. And the concept, which placed the emphasis on innovative narrative forms and the border areas between film, music and other art forms, was such a tremendous success that a spontaneous decision was made to move events out of restrictive rooms to the outside, transforming them into big open air shows. The festival was incredibly flexible about organizational matters and the originally planned number of events was tripled extempore as a consequence of the huge interest.

The festival’s success was probably founded on the unique opportunity, not only to experience films and unusual forms of presentation, but to find out background information about production conditions, and the works’ cultural, social and political references as well. It exceeded all expectations, with events attended by audiences of up to 900, and viewers who still insisted on discussion time with German filmmakers after a 3-hour program.

Attendance figures of over 3000 made Blitzfilm 2007 into the biggest presentation of German short film production to date in China. In 2008 the festival will be extended to include more Chinese cities.

VILLA AURORA NIGHT 2007

The first Villa Aurora Night took place in Berlin on 29 November 2007. In the presence of cultural, political and business representatives, the recipients of the Villa Aurora scholarship in the fields of Literature, Fine Arts, Music and Film were presented in a festive atmosphere.

The film jury, made up of Christian Wagner (director of Warchild and former scholarship recipient), the producers Katrin Schloesser and Meike Kordes, and Nicole Kaufmann (German Films) awarded 3-month scholarships to the Villa Aurora in Los Angeles to: Birgit Moeller (director of Valerie), Marc Rothemund (director of Sophie Scholl – The Last Days), and Jan Koester (director of the short Our Man in Nirvana).
HOT SPOT NRW

Ralph Fiennes, Willem Dafoe, Michel Piccoli and Bruno Ganz are all heading to NRW this spring to shoot their new films. Fiennes is in Stephen Daldry’s bestseller-adaptation The Reader, a co-production with the Cologne-based Central Scope NRW in cooperation with Bonn-based Senfkorn Film, Neunte Babelsberg Film as well as Mirage and The Weinstein Company.

Dafoe, Piccoli and Ganz are taking on the lead roles in Theo Angelopoulos’ new film. The Greek director is filming his latest project, Dust of Time, in Cologne, Duesseldorf and Bonn, turning a Cologne bar into a New York hotspot from 1974. The film is being produced as an international co-production between the Athens-based Theo Angelopoulos Film Productions together with Classic Srl and the Cologne-based Lichtmeer Film. Both films are being supported by the Filmstiftung NRW.

SOIRÉE ALLEMANDE IN CLERMONT-FERRAND

The International Short Film Festival Clermont-Ferrand has become one of the world’s premier cinema events dedicated to short films. On the occasion of its 30th anniversary, the third edition of “Soirée Allemande: Coup de Cœur – Le Court Métrage Allemande” had its premiere. This extraordinary short film project is a cooperation of the German Short Film Association (AG Kurzfilm), German Films, the Festival du Court Métrage Clermont-Ferrand, the Goethe-Institute Lyon and the KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg. After its premiere in Clermont-Ferrand, the program will be touring the Goethe Institutes of French-speaking countries and institutes of the Alliance française.

From almost 300 German festival entries in Clermont-Ferrand, nine films were chosen to be part of the program, which offers a wide variety of genres – from short fiction and animation to documentary and experimental shorts: On the Line (Reto Caffi), Framing (Bert Gottschalk), Cigaretta mon amour – Portrait of my Father (Rosa Hannah

“SHORT REPORT – THE SHORT FILM MAGAZINE”

In November 2007, the German Short Film Association (AG Kurzfilm) published the first magazine which is dedicated entirely to German short film. Once a year, SHORT report will give an overview about events and successes of the German short film scene, as well as inform about developments, trends and recent film political issues. It will also offer reports by filmmakers who presented their short films successfully abroad.

As a printed publication, SHORT report will complement the existing short film portal shortfilm.de. Furthermore, its aim is to provide international industry professionals with an insight into the vivid German short film scene. SHORT report is available on request from the AG Kurzfilm: office@ag-kurzfilm.de.

ONE YEAR OF THE GERMAN FEDERAL FILM FUND

The new 3-year German Federal Film Fund (Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds, DFFF) can look back on a successful first year. The numbers speak for themselves: in 2007, 99 cinema projects were supported with a total of exactly €59,380,357.33 and procured a lasting economic effect (of almost €390 million) for Germany as a film location.

With a wide variety of genres from 80 feature film productions, 14 documentaries and 5 animated film projects, majority German productions benefited from the new source of funding, including: Voodoo – Die Kraft des Heilens (documentary) with the minimal production volume of €345,000 and the RAF-drama Der Baader Meinhof Komplex with the most substantial budget of some €20.3 million.

But most of the projects’ budgets were average-sized: 61 productions received between €1 million and the maximum €5 million in funding. The first DFFF-supported films made it to the screens in the fall of 2007. And 2008 promises to be an interesting film year, when most of the funded projects will be making their ways to the cinemas, including: Dennis Gansel’s adaptation of the youth novel Die Welle, OSCAR-winner Caroline Link’s latest film Im Winter ein Jahr, and Joseph Vilsmaier’s highly-anticipated comedy Die Geschichte des Brandner Kaspar.
For the 10th time, the MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg awards their prize for the best script from southwestern Germany. The Thomas Strittmatter Drehbuchpreis – formerly Baden-Württembergischer Drehbuchpreis – is endowed with a prize money of €25,000. The award ceremony takes place during this year’s Berlin International Film Festival on 13 February 2008 in the Baden-Württemberg Representation in Berlin.

Among 30 submissions, Prof. Jan Schuette, Peer Martiny, Winfried Stephan and Eva Hosemann nominated the following three projects for the Thomas Strittmatter Drehbuchpreis 2008:

1. *Bronjas Erbe* by Beate Rygiert describes the journey of a man of German descent with his daughter to Poland in order to account for the past.
2. *Die Stille liebt es und die Nacht* by Sylke Rene Mayer, unconventionally narrates the love story between Andreas Streicher, the lost genius, and one of Germany’s most famous poets, Friedrich Schiller. In Susanne Schneider’s *Es kommt der Tag*, a young woman meets her mother after 30 years and reveals a family secret that reaches back to the time of the German Autumn in 1977.

All nominated projects were written as scripts for television or cinema and have yet to be filmed.

The Berlinale Keynotes are a joint initiative of the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and the Berlin International Film Festival, and address international decision-makers from the fields of film, media, games and Web 2.0. The event is organized in cooperation with the mabb Medienanstalt Berlin-Brandenburg/Medienwoche and the media.net berlinbrandenburg. Attendance is by invitation only. More details are available at www.berlinale.de and www.medienboard.de/berlinale_keynotes.

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At the end of 2007, Hamburg’s mayor Ole von Beust announced the launch of a media initiative including a €4 million rise in resources for film funding within the next three years. “This helps the industry and the film location of Hamburg to position itself more firmly; for the joint funding of Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein the increased funding budget allows for the maintenance and expansion of successful cooperation,” says Eva Hubert, Executive Director of Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein. In 2007 FFHSH allocated some €10.5 million for the development, production, and evaluation of films. This sum includes €1.3 million from additional funds for animation films provided by the Department of Economy and Finance within the framework of their program for innovation, growth and employment.

**DIGITAL CINEMA COOPERATION**

The German Federal Film Board (FFA) and the Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC) have issued a common declaration for the upcoming Digital Roll-Out in Europe. Both institutions have vowed to pool their efforts and measures and coordinate these with other European funding institutions. The FFA and CNC believe that transparency is of utmost importance in the Europe-wide digitalization of cinemas, as are the specific characteristics and variety of European cinemas. Both institutions emphasize the importance of three basic principles regarding quality and safety, uniform technical standards, and the neutrality of equipment used.

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After successfully premiering in 2007, the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and the Berlin International Film Festival are once more offering masterminds of film and media a forum for reflecting and discussing future issues of the film industry in 2008.

**BERLINALE KEYNOTES TO DISCUSS FUTURE FILM INDUSTRY ISSUES**

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The young protagonists’ daily lives reflect the entire spectrum of experience. Their fears and problems, their capacity for fun and sense of humor, all of their observations and their probing can be understood as a response to the quintessential question: why am I here?

Antje Starost is a graduate of the German Film & Television Academy (dffb) in Berlin and founded Antje Starost Film Produktion in 1980. She and Hans-Helmut Grotjahn are long-term collaborators. “Our specialty,” says Starost, “is the intensive interlocking of direction and camerawork, whether in feature films as well as in making creative documentaries.”

Starost continues: “Content and form and the ideas for the visual implementation grow with the project’s developmental steps, from the idea, the research, the script to preparing to shoot. Precise preparation allows, in our experience, an openness for the unforeseen and for challenges and, at the same time, a flexibility when shooting which does not become arbitrariness. To that comes an emphasis in our work, that with children, which inspired us to make this project.”

SK

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**7 oder Warum ich auf der Welt bin**


**Effi**

Type of Project  Feature Film Cinema  Genre  Drama  Production Company  Constantin Film Produktion/Munich  With backing from Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmfoerderung Hamburg, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds (DFFF)  Producer  Guenter Rohrbach  Executive Producer  Martin Moszkowicz  Director  Hermine Huntgeburth  Screenplay  Volker Einrauch, based on the novel Effi Briest by Theodor Fontane  Director of Photography  Martin Langer  Editor  Eva Schnare  Production Design  Thomas Freudenthal  Principal Cast  Julia Jentsch, Sebastian Koch, Barbara Auer, Misel Maticevic, Margarita Broich, Ruediger Vogler, Juliane Koehler, Thomas Thieme, Andre Hennicke  Casting  Simone Baer  Format  35 mm, color, cs, Dolby SR  Shooting Language  German  Shooting in  Berlin, Brandenburg, Poland, Latvia, September – November 2007  German Distributor  Constantin Film Verleih/Munich
The impetuous 17-year-old Effi Briest (Julia Jentsch) marries, at her parents’ behest, Baron Instetten (Sebastian Koch), a former suitor of her mother (Juliane Koehler). Instetten is a man of principles and few feelings on the verge of a glittering political career. The couple move to the small Baltic coastal town of Kissing, where Effi faces a monotonous life: until Major Crampas (Misel Maticevic) arrives. An old regimental comrade of Instetten and a charming ladies’ man, through him Effi learns what love and passion can mean. For Crampas it is a fatal affair. But Effi, other than in Fontane’s classic novel, will meet a different fate.

Theodor Fontane’s Effi Briest is 19th century German literature’s great novel of love and adultery: a unique favorite of filmmakers. But now, for the first time, comes a director who has a new and modern take on Effi. Hermine Huntgeburth’s previous love stories, such as Im Kreise meiner Lieben and Die Weisse Massai, demonstrate her great sensitivity and quite unique signature. In Effi she combines historical material with contemporary consciousness and shows Effi as a modern girl. Fontane’s novel might have appeared in 1894, but feelings and obsessions remain the same today. Back then, people did not fire just verbal bullets, they also fired real ones.

The multi-award winning Julia Jentsch (Sophie Scholl – Die letzten Toge) follows in the footsteps of Marianne Hoppe, Ruth Leuwerik, Angelica Domröse and Hanna Schygulla. The rest of the cast is no less classic: Sebastian Koch (Das Leben der Anderen), Juliane Koehler (Der Untergang), Thomas Thieme (Das Leben der Anderen), and Misel Maticevic (Hotte im Paradies). The film’s producer is Guenter Rohrbach (Die Weisse Massai, Schtrenchl, Das Boot).

“The Americans and especially the English have shown us again and again for years how successful you can be with literary classics,” Rohrbach says. “There is a large and open audience. For it to succeed you need to combine the thrill of a historical situation, its decor and costumes, its unique aura, with contemporary consciousness. That’s our goal with Effi.”

Rohrbach, a doyen of contemporary German cinema, has produced more than 40 theatrical features and garnered many honors, including several German Film Awards and Bavarian Film Awards, the Adolf Grimme Award, two Golden Cameras as well as being nominated for the OSCAR and the Golden Globe.

“Effi stands principally on two strong women,” Rohrbach explains. “Director Hermine Huntgeburth and actress Julia Jentsch. Hermine Huntgeburth has shown how sensitively and also in what a contemporary way she can relate stories. And Julia Jentsch, not least of all since Sophie Scholl, is one of the great hopes of the German film scene. She is the ideal casting for Effi.”

Entsorgte Vaeter

Type of Project: Documentary Cinema  
With backing from: Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, MEDIA  
Producer: Douglas Wolfsperger  
Commissioning Editor: Gudrun Hanke El-Ghomri  
Director: Douglas Wolfsperger  
Screenplay: Douglas Wolfsperger  
Director of Photography: Tanja Trentmann  
Editor: Jean-Marc Lesguillons  
Principal Cast: Franzjoerg Krieg, Benny Sosna and others  
Format: HD, blow-up to 35 mm, color, cs, Dolby SR  
Shooting Language: German  
Shooting in: Karlsruhe, Duesseldorf, Berlin, October – November 2007

Contact

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Entsorgte Vaeter (“Firewalled Fathers”) is the latest documentary from the multi award-winning Douglas Wolfsperger. This time, he examines the cases of fathers who, following a divorce or the otherwise end of their relationships, face difficult or, in some cases, insurmountable barriers, when seeing their children.

“It’s a very burning social issue,” Wolfsperger says. “It’s also a taboo that fathers don’t get to see their kids. I think it’s time to show people this phenomenon exists.”

Wolfsperger, himself a father of two daughters, started making Super8 films as a schoolboy, and, after leaving school, became a trainee director at public broadcaster SWR in Baden-Baden. In 1982 he moved to Munich and worked on various productions at the local University of Television & Film. In 1985 he made his first feature, Lebe kreuz und sterbe quer. Since the early 1990s he has made numerous documentaries and portraits for SWR and WDR.

His 1999 feature Heirate mir! – Die Braut und ihr Totengräber attracted a great deal of attention for its contentious casting: in particular, Wolfsperger’s hiring of the television presenter and acting-inexperienced Verona Feldbusch to play a dubious Polish woman alongside Ulrich Noethen.
In 2002, Wolfsperger’s film Bellaria – so lange wir leben played at many international festivals and picked up a host of awards, including the Bavarian Film Award, the Ernst-Lubitsch-Award from the German Film Critics’ Association as well as the Gold Plaque for Best Documentary in Chicago.

His other cinema documentaries include Die Blütitter (2003, which unspooled at the 57th Locarno International Film Festival), War’s Sie schon mal in mich verliebt? (2004, which also premiered in Locarno and took the Documentary Award at the 27th Biberacher Filmfestspiele in 2005) and Der lange Weg ans Licht (2007).

“I work without a narrator,” Wolfsperger explains. “Film comes from pictures and the people before the camera. I come from a feature background. I use film tools for the camerawork and music. Casting is important. You must have very interesting people with humor. They must be entertaining. The highest commandment is: thou shalt not bore!”

Ganz nah bei Dir’s director and co-writer, Almut Getto, is no stranger to German cinema. After postgraduate studies in film in Cologne, her first feature, Fickende Fische (Do Fish Do It?), walked off with an armful of prizes, including Best Director at the Max Ophuels Festival in Saarbruecken, the German Film Critics’ Award as well as the German Film Award in Gold for Best Script.

Bastian Trost (Phillip) has a broad range of cinema and TV experience, and will be instantly recognizable to anyone who saw the opening interrogation scenes of Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck’s OSCAR-winning tour de force, Das Leben der Anderen.

Playing the role of the blind cellist Lina, Katharina Schuettler is an accomplished musician in her own right. Her previous credits include, for the cinema, Das weisse Rauschen (1999, dir: Hans Weingartner), Die Innere Sicherheit (2000, dir: Christian Petzold), Sophiiiie! (2002, dir: Michael Hofmann), Wahrheit oder Pflicht (2003, dir: Jan Martin Scharf) and Maedchen am Sonntag (2005, dir: RP Kahl). She is also equally at home in front of the TV cameras and on stage.

Riva Filmproduktion was founded in 2006 by Michael Eckelt, former head of Neue Impuls Film. His previous credits include Sportmann des Jahrhunderts (2006), Obaba (2005), Die syrische Braut (2005), Falling Into Paradise (2005) and Sophiiiie!.

Riva’s emphasis lies in producing German and international feature films for the cinema as well as television, with the focus on arthouse and quality entertainment. In it’s short existence the company has already co-produced two features, Beautiful Bitch and Jemin – It’s Hard To Be Nice. Another project, Lemon Tree, is currently in post-production, while Fasten a la Carte, scheduled to lens in 2008, is in pre-production.
John Rabe

Type of Project Feature Film
Cinema Genre Biopic, Drama, History
Production Company Hofmann & Voges Entertainment/Munich, in co-production with EOS Entertainment/Oberhaching, Majestic Filmproduktion/Berlin, Huayi Brothers/Peking, Pampa Production/Paris
With backing from Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, German-French Miniträte, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DFFF)
Producers Mischa Hofmann, Jan Mojto, Benjamin Herrmann
Director Florian Gallenberger
Screenplay Florian Gallenberger
Director of Photography Juergen Juerges
Editor Hansjoerg Weissbrich
Production Design Juhua Tu, Xin Ran Tu
Principal Cast Ulrich Tukur, Anne Consigny, Daniel Bruehl, Dagmar Manzel, Steve Buscemi, Jingchu Zhang, Gottfried John
 Casting Cornelia von Braun
Special Effects Joachim Grueninger
Format 35 mm, color, cs, Dolby
Shooting Language multilingual
Shooting in Nanking & Shanghai/China, October 2007 – February 2008
German Distributor Majestic Filmverleih/Berlin

World Sales
Beta Cinema / Dept. of Beta Film GmbH
Andreas Rothbauer
Gruenwalder Weg 28 d · 82041 Oberhaching/Germany
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email: AROthbauer@betacinema.com
www.betacinema.com

“John Rabe is very well known in China – I didn’t meet anyone who didn’t know him,” Herrmann says. “But the treatment of the Nanking Massacre in China has also been strange – mention of it was suppressed during the time under Mao and there was no reference to it in the school textbooks. It has only really been discussed openly in recent times and then reference would be made to the war crimes whenever discussion centers on Chinese-Japanese relations. The massacre was instrumentalized for some time for propaganda purposes, but now there is more serious examination of this chapter in history. And Rabe’s role in the attempts to save people is common knowledge.”

In Germany, on the other hand, there were Rabe’s diaries edited by Erwin Wickert as John Rabe – Der Gute Deutsche von Nanking, some articles in magazines and newspapers and a few TV features, “but one can’t really speak of Rabe being well-known,” Herrmann declares. “That is something that from the distributor’s viewpoint I see as an advantage: a magnificent true story of a reluctant hero, a story that is not familiar to most people so it will be interesting to write and read about it.”

The central role of John Rabe – who was recently called “The Schindler of China” by the New York Times – is being played by Ulrich Tukur whose credits include Costa-Gavras’ Amén, Florian Henckel von Donnersmark’s The Lives of Others, and Rainer Kaufmann’s Runaway Horse opposite an international cast including Daniel Bruehl (Salvador), Anne Consigny (Le Scaphandre et le Papillon), Jingchu Zhang (Rush Hour 3), Steve Buscemi (Interview), Dagmar Manzel (According to the Plan), and Gottfried John (James Bond – Goldeneye).

John Rabe sees Gallenberger working once again with the veteran German cinematographer Juergen Juerges after his first feature Shadows of Time and the OSCAR-winning Quiero Ser. “On this film, there will be more handheld camera than was the case on the slower, more elegiac Shadows of Time; there will be more movement and the camera will be up much closer and have a more dynamic feeling,” Herrmann explains. “It is true that Florian is drawn again and again to set his films abroad although we are working on a couple of stories for the future which would be set in Germany. I guess the reason is that they are simply existential stories. The story he tells in Mexico in Quiero Ser, for example, couldn’t be told in Germany and I think this is one of Florian’s great strengths, that he is able to work his way into foreign cultures.”

Speaking about the experiences of filming in China, Herrmann says that “it was a long process from our point of view to get all of the permits to shoot in China, but our partners there say that everything went relatively quickly for Chinese conditions.”

“As far as the working conditions in China are concerned, one has to be aware that there is a different mentality and different way of working. There is the language problem so every department has to work with lots of translators, and then there is the fact that the Chinese are used to working a seven-day week without a day off. So this means that by the fourth week, the crew is so tired that everything becomes much slower. The Germans though have a quite different kind of workload and pace. But, overall, working with a German-Chinese crew has been a challenging, but rewarding experience.”

MB
Kaifek Murder

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Mystery Thriller Production Company 24 Frames Film/Gruenwald, in co-production with SevenPictures/Unterfoehring, Neue Kinowelt Filmproduktion/Berlin With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Mitteldeutsche Medienfroderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Deutscher Filmfroderfonds (DFFF) Producer Monika Raebel Co-Producers Boris Schoenfelder, Stefan Gaertner, Christian Balz Director Esther Gronenborn Screenplay Soenke Lars Neuwoechner, Christian Limmer Director of Photography Chris Valentien Editor Dirk Grau Production Design Tom Horning Principal Cast Benno Fuermann, Alexandra Maria Lara, Michael Gwisdek, Henry Stange, Erni Mangold, Monika Hansen Casting Hanna Hansen Format 35 mm, color, cs, Dolby SR Shooting Language German Shooting in Thuringia and Lower Bavaria, November – December 2007 German Distributor Kinowelt Filmverleih/Leipzig

One of Germany’s great unsolved murder mysteries has provided the inspiration for the first feature film production by Monika Raebel’s young Munich-based production outfit 24 Frames Film which wrapped shooting on Esther Gronenborn’s Kaifeck Murder (working title) shortly before Christmas.

“Some time back, I came upon this case which is very well known in Bavaria as one of the most mysterious criminal cases where six people were bestially murdered in a village called Hinterkaifeck [between Ingolstadt and Schrobenhausen, around 70 kilometers north of Munich] in 1922,” Raebel explains. “The case remains unsolved to this day and has taken on something of a mythic quality. There are discussion forums in the Internet about who the perpetrator(s) might be and retired police inspectors still investigating the evidence.”

“This all fascinated me because I felt it contained a lot that one needs for an exciting and interesting film idea,” says the young producer who developed the project in-house before bringing in screenwriters Soenke Lars Neuwoechner and Christian Limmer to write the screenplay on the basis of the books by journalist Peter Leuschner about the real Hinterkaifeck case.

Kaifeck Murder centers on the photographer Marc who ends up with his son ‘Tyll’ in the remote and unconventional village of Kaifec. A secret surrounds this place, the young, open-minded Juliana tells him. Marc is strangely moved by the tale of the gruesome murders at a nearby farm in 1922, and, suddenly, inexplicable things start happening to him at night. He feels a mysterious connection to the events from back then and is drawn ever deeper into the dark past. So deep that it is not only his own life which is in danger, but also that of his son.

“My intention is to bring life to the mystery genre in Germany,” Raebel says. “I want the mystery here to be developed organically from the setting, to be credible and not just tacked on to the plot.”

She stresses that this film will not be riding the current “Heimatfilm/dialect wave” set in motion by Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s Grave Decisions: while the action is set in Bavaria – the film was shot in Thuringia and Lower Bavaria – the characters will not be speaking in the local dialect. “We want to try to make something special and modern and aim for a modern, commercial film which will appeal to German audiences and the international market,” Raebel suggests, noting the cast and crew were all “attracted by the chance to do something different where there are fresh possibilities. It was a very exciting temptation for them.”

The choice of director fell on Esther Gronenborn, a graduate of Munich’s University of Television & Film (HFF) whose credits include alaska.de (German Film Award 2001) and Stadt als Beute, because of “her sound appreciation of the dramaturgy and psychology of her figures” and “her ability to emphasize the sensorial level in sound and image.”

As Raebel points out, Gronenborn is joined on this project by such “regular” collaborators as her DoP Chris Valentien and production designer Tom Horning. Moreover, the director has a connection with distributor Kinowelt going back to her 2000 feature debut alaska.de which it had co-produced and released theatrically.

The co-production with Neue Kinowelt Filmproduktion and SevenPictures is headed by Benno Fuermann and Alexandra Maria Lara as Marc and Juliana, with Marc’s son played by the child actor Henry Stange who appeared opposite Fuermann in the TV event movie Sturmflut. Other roles are taken by Michael Gwisdek and Erni Mangold.

Working on Kaifeck Murder after producing TV movies such as the comedies Scharf wie Chili and Ein Luftikus zum Verlieben and the 2-parter Bibelcode, Raebel is now keen in the future to try her hand with other genres for the cinema apart from that of the mystery thriller. For example, one of the next projects planned by 24 Frames is a comedy. “There is a lot to catch up on,” she observes, “there are still some gaps in the market, but also great chances.”

MB
Kronos

**Type of Project** Feature Film Cinema

**Genre** Drama

**Production Company** Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg/Ludwigsburg, in co-production with ZDF Theaterkanal/Mainz, CP Medien/Ludwigsburg, Kasbah-Films/Tangiers, Panther/Munich

**With backing from** Sonnenklar.tv, Caligari Foerderpreis der Stadt Ludwigsburg, Artus Postproduktion, Deutsche Bank

**Producers** Lisa Groezinger, Christopher Zwickler

**Director** Olav F. Wehling

**Screenplay** Olav F. Wehling

**Director of Photography** Armin Franzen

**Editor** Katja Fischer

**Music** by Matthias Klein

**Production Design** Stefanie Kromrei

**Principal Cast** Isolde Barth, Klaus Gruenberg, Sergej Moya, Sonja Gruentzig, Oktay Oezdemir

**Casting** Hanna Hansen

**Format** 16 mm, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 1:1.85, Dolby SR

**Shooting Language** German

**Shooting in** Morocco, September – October 2007

**Distributor** CP Medien/Ludwigsburg

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The cast and crew of Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg student Olav F. Wehling’s graduation film *Kronos* are sure not to forget their two months of shooting in the Moroccan desert in Ouarzazate and Merzouga last autumn.

“It was a real challenge in all areas,” recalls Christopher Zwickler who produced the film with fellow student Lisa Groezinger. “Firstly, there was the challenge of bringing a large German team to Morocco and looking after the needs of 25 people.”

The project’s financing was another challenge – the team had staged a benefit party at the Filmakademie in the summer to raise funds – and producer Lisa Groezinger agrees that “it is unusual for a student feature film to go on location to a place like Morocco. In addition, we were shooting at locations in the desert and working with a Moroccan crew so that the language on set was English.”

However, the production could draw on the services of the Filmakademie-graduate Karim Debbagh who returned to his homeland in 2003 to set up the Tangiers-based production house Kasbah-Films which also produced Michael Dreher’s award-winning *Fair Trade* and organized production services for Simon Gross’ *Fata Morgana* before becoming a co-producer on *Kronos*.

Debbagh is now handling production services and line production for Irene von Alberti’s new feature *Tangerine* and Lancelot von Naso’s *Waffenstillstand* and is developing a new project with Michael Dreher called *Das Zimmer*.

After his 2005 debut feature *Down the Drain (Futschicata)* about life in an unconventional commune which won prizes at Saarbruecken’s Max Ophuels Festival, Ludwigshefn’s Festival of German Cinema and Pristina’s Skena Up Festival, Wehling now turns to the world of Greek mythology with *Kronos* to give a contemporary version of the story of Cronos, Uranos, Gaia and Rhea as a family on the run in the desert from an apocalyptic catastrophe.

The head of the family Uranos is played by Klaus Gruenberg (whose credits include *The Longing* and *Bella Martha*), his wife Gaia by Munich-based actress and Chabrol “regular” Isolde Barth, while the daughter Rhea and son Cronos were cast with up-and-coming talents Sonja Gruentzig and Sergej Moya. Oktay Oezdemir – who appeared in Detlev Buck’s *Tough Enough* and Zueli Aladag’s *Anger* – is cast as a mute boy whose attempts to help the family survive in the blistering heat lead to a fatal chain of events.

“Thematically, *Kronos* may not follow on from *Down the Drain*, but it again shows that Olav likes working with an ensemble cast,” Lisa Groezinger explains. “He enjoys the work with actors and they were all there the whole time. There were only lead parts in this film.”

While cast and crew sometimes had to make do without their creature comforts, the production “on the whole, had luck with the weather,” she adds. “It was very hot but we had purposely chosen to shoot in October and November when the sand storms are fewer. We had a phenomenal experience, though, when there was a rainstorm in the Sahara during the shoot. It wasn’t planned, but it was a godsend!”

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**Liebeslied**

**Type of Project** Feature Film Cinema

**Genre** Drama, Music

**Production Company** Flying Moon Filmproduktion/Halle, in co-production with Koppfilm/Berlin, ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz

**With backing from** Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung

**Producer** Roshanak Behesht Nedjad

**Commissioning Editor**
met a Parkinson’s sufferer living near Hamburg who read the drafts of the screenplay and gave us advice. We wanted to make sure that the disease is portrayed correctly and integrate the perspective of someone affected into the character [of Roger].”

Meanwhile, an important condition had to be met for the casting of the two leads: they should be able to sing and be musical.

“The casting of Jan Plewka was a real stroke of luck. He was found by Anne and is the true embodiment of the character of Roger,” von Donop says.

Although not having any formal training as an actor, Plewka has more than 15 years experience of working in the music business: in the early 1990s, he co-founded the band Selig with Christian Neander and went on to form such bands as Zinoba and Tempeau before going on a solo concert tour with the songs of Rio Reiser in the last couple of years.

And Nicolette Krebitz, whose second feature film Das Herz ist ein dunkler Wald was released in German cinemas at the end of last year and who also recorded an album with fellow actress Jasmin Tabatabai, “is the perfect casting for Dinah,” von Donop suggests.

She explains that the music is “organically integrated into the film’s action: we have found a form where there doesn’t seem to be any comparable film. Music and songs develop from a conversation between the two characters and then they continue their conversation as before. I think one can often express things with music which would be much harder if one had to use language."

Right up to just before principal photography began at the end of November, songs were being specially composed for the film, the musical styles ranging from heavy metal – the character of Roger is a Metallica fan – to German rock. Moreover, extensive preparations were also being devoted to training the child actors and planning some complex dream sequences as well as rehearsing with Plewka for such scenes as when he succumbs to an uncontrollable shaking fit.

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Mein Vater, Mein Onkel

Type of Project Documentary Cinema Genre Melodrama Production Company Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dfbb), in co-production with Bonsai Film/Berlin Producers

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Christoph Heller, Hartmut Bitomsky Director Christoph Heller
Screenplay Christoph Heller Director of Photography Manuel Kinzer Principal Cast Sinan Al-Kuri Format HDV, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 1:1.85, Dolby SR Shooting Language German/English/Arabic Shooting in Berlin, Munich, Dreieich, Dubai, Sharjah/UAE, May – December 2007

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Last year, German Film & Television Academy student Christoph Heller came to wider attention with his social spot Security Camera (Ueberwachungskamera) which received a Special Mention at the Berlinale’s Teddy Awards and then followed this with the shooting of his feature-length documentary Mein Vater, Mein Onkel.

The idea of making a film about his school-friend Sinan Al-Kuri had been gestating for some time before the first day of shooting in Berlin last May. The two have known each other since their school days in Darmstadt and both subsequently moved to Berlin to pursue a career in the film industry.

One evening, Sinan told Heller about his family history: how he had been born in Mosul during the Iran-Iraq war when his father was captured and spent nine years as a prisoner-of-war; how his birth mother had persuaded her brother and his German wife Brunhild to adopt the young child; how the German foster mother – unable to find acceptance in Iraqi society – flees to Germany with Sinan; and how contact with Iraq finally breaks off and Sinan is fearful of going any closer into his family background in the following years.

Then on 29 March 2007, Heller received a text message from Sinan which made the project’s realization a distinct possibility. He wrote: “My brother has written to me and now his sister as well. They included photos. They are all living now in Dubai and my sister is coming here [to Berlin].”

As the subsequent months showed, the project posed all kinds of challenges, but director Heller successfully managed to surmount them all.

“My fears that Sinan would not appear authentic in front of the camera because he is also an actor could be alleviated by me getting him to forget the camera,” Heller recalls, adding that he also first learned many interesting details about his friend’s family history once Sinan had met his family in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Building up an atmosphere of mutual trust was as crucial between Heller and his protagonist as it was between the filmmaker and Sinan’s family members.

“After all, there are not only the enormous religious and cultural differences and the associated reservations, but the subject in itself is particularly sensitive,” Heller explains. Among the questions his family were probably asking themselves were: “Why is this film student interfering in our family history? Why is he wanting to make a film about it? What exactly is a documentary?”

However, once Sinan moved to live with his family, the film team was able to win their trust and received a deeper insight into the family members’ relationships with one another.

When filming with the family, the team also tried to be as unobtrusive as possible and were doubtless helped in this by DoP Manuel Kinzer using the Canon XHA 1 HDV camera and soundman Marko Weichler deploying clip-on mikes.

For Heller, who is subsequently regarded as being almost ‘one of the family’ after his stay in Sharjah, “a very positive aspect of this film project is the fact that on both sides, the Arabian and the German, an exciting cultural exchange has taken place so that we finally see that there are only minimal differences existing in spite of varying concepts of religion and values.”

Moreover, he suggests that “this film will also contribute to the Iraqi population not being regarded as terrorists but just as really normal people like us.”

MB

Mitte Ende August

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Drama Production Company Film1/Berlin, in co-production with Senator Film Produktion/Berlin, NDR/Hamburg, ARTE/Strasbourg

With backing from Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds (DFFF), Filmfoerderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Nordmedia, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg Producers Henning Ferber, Sebastian Zuehr, Marcus Welke Co-Producer Christoph Mueller Director Sebastian Schipper Screenplay Sebastian Schipper Director of Photography Frank Blau Editor Horst Reiter Principal Cast Marie Baeumer, Milan Peschel, Anna Brueggemann, André Hennicke, Gert Voss Casting Anja Dihrberg Casting Format 35 mm, color, cs, Dolby SR Shooting Language German Shooting in Berlin, Hamburg, Lower Saxony, August – October 2007 German Distributor Senator Film Verleih/Berlin

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After completion on his last feature Ein Freund von mir (A Friend of Mine), director Sebastian Schipper began shooting his third film Mitte Ende August less than twelve months after the previous film’s cinema release in late October 2006.
While the new project is inspired by motifs from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s book *Elective Affinities* (*Wahlverwandtschaften*), Schipper stresses that “this is definitely not an adaptation. For me, those desperate souls of Goethe’s time like Buechner, Kleist or Hoelderlin are much closer to me, but I just wanted to read the classics and concentrate on books from the time before there were films. When I read Goethe’s book, I was expecting to enter a house which was full of very heavy furniture and thick curtains and little light. But when I came in, everything was very fine, simple and unspoken. I swiped everything that I liked. So my relationship to this original source was, on the one hand, having a great feeling of being able to work on someone else’s idea and, on the other, perhaps more than ever of making my very own film.”

As he explains, the film’s action is “classical like with Goethe: two men and two women in a house in the summer. A couple at the end of their thirties has bought a house in the country and is spending the summer doing the renovations when two more come to visit. The couple, who is in love and happy with one another, is suddenly confronted by their evil spirits. The husband [Milan Peschel] meets a young woman [Anna Brueggemann], while the wife [Marie Baeumer] herself encounters a man [André Hennicke] who seemingly could be more suitable for her.”

“For me personally, this is again a film like in my first two where a young man finds out about where he belongs,” Schipper observes. “The main characters in *Absolute Giants* and *A Friend of Mine* asked where their places are in life were and we have the same situation here again: is my place alongside this woman I love so much or are there other places where I could also belong?”

He recalls that he had the four lead roles in mind when writing the screenplay a year ago and describes *Mitte Ende August* “as my first film with just drums, bass and guitar. There is really simple instrumentalization and classic songs. I have the feeling that I went into a studio with a band for two weeks and recorded rock’n’roll classics unplugged. And that was it.”

“A Friend of Mine was a kind of master class for me as a director,” continues Schipper who started his career as an actor (Winter Sleepers, *The English Patient*) before moving over to directing ten years ago. “I could really focus on sounding out the craft of filmmaking during the making of that film, and the payoff now is the new project where I could make use of everything I had learned. I knew that I had to make this film: in fact, I was aware of *Mitte Ende August* as a project even before I started work on *A Friend of Mine*. And now I feel that I have worked more than ever before as a director here – and that’s what I want!”

Der Mond und andere Liebhaber

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Tragicomedy Production Company Mafilm/Berlin, in co-production with MDR/Leipzig With backing from Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DFFF), Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA) Producer Eva-Marie Martens Director Bernd Boehler Screenplay Bernd Boehler Director of Photography Florian Foest Editor Esther Weinert Music by Silly (Hassbecker, Barton, Resnicek, Loos) Production Design Justyna Jaszczyk Principal Cast Katharina Thalbach, Fritz Haberland, Andreas Schmidt, Birol Unel, Steffen Scheumann, Bruno Apitz, Sarah Blaskewitz, Oezguer Oezata, Uwe Daag Berlin, Detlev Buck Casting Doris Borkmann Special Effects Exozet Effects, Olaf Skrzipczyk Format Super 16 mm, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 1:1.85, Dolby DTS Shooting Language German Shooting in Altenburg, Bad Koesen, Zeitz, Darss, Berlin, Alanya/Turkey, October – December 2007 German Distributor Neue Visionen Filmverleih/Berlin

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An actress of Katharina Thalbach’s pedigree could read the telephone book, to herself, for two hours and still turn in a riveting and award-garnering performance! So champagne corks must have flown at Mafilm when, in the words of Der Mond und andere Liebhaber producer Eva-Marie Martens, Thalbach “agreed to make the film immediately after she had finished reading the script.”

Der Mond und andere Liebhaber narrates the story of Hanna, a woman who will not take life’s set-backs and knock-downs sitting down. Instead, she takes them in her stride, picks herself up and marches onward. This is a woman who continually draws new courage from her inexhaustible will to live. Whatever losses and uncertainties come her way, she remains true to herself.

When her former employer, a cosmetics shop, goes bust, Hanna simply helps herself to boxes full of perfume. As life and politics change around her, principally the fall of the Berlin Wall and German re-

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unification, Hanna battles on – through the new job at the petrol station, the steady advances from Knuti (Steffen Scheumann), right through to a trip to Turkey – until she meets the great love of her life. But Gansar (Birol Uenel) is not a free man. Hanna’s desperation leads to a very public scene and personal tragedy. Except, this is Hanna we are talking about. So she does what only she can. She picks herself up again, and starts over in new hope.

As if Der Mond und andere Liebhaber needed it, another thespian seal of approval comes from Birol Uenel, whose performance in Fatih Akin’s Berlin Golden Bear-winning Head-On still resonates.


Mafilm was founded in 1992 by Eva-Marie Martens, Lothar Bellag (now deceased) and Alexander Martens to put production quality before quantity. The company also dedicates itself to training young talent. Until 2002 the company worked exclusively in television (movies, series, magazine shows, reports, commercials, image films). Der Mond und andere Liebhaber is Mafilm’s first home-grown feature film. As Eva-Marie Martens says: “Of course, we are very happy that an experienced director and writer like Bernd Boehlich offered us this material. But almost more importantly: we have faith in our ability.”

Mr Nobody


German Distributor Concorde Filmverleih/Munich

2007 saw the Berlin-Brandenburg region playing host to several big-budget studio productions ranging from the Wachowskis’ Speed Racer through Bryan Singer’s Valkyrie to Tom Tykwer’s The International.

They were joined last autumn by Belgian director Jaco van Dormael’s first feature film for 10 years, Mr Nobody, an ambitious English-language sci-fi romantic drama put together with a staggering 27 individual financing partners as a French-German-Belgian-Canadian co-production. An international cast headed by US actor Jared Leto includes German-born Diane Kruger (whose recent credits include Goodbye Bafana and National Treasure), Sarah Polley, Linh Dan Pham and Rhys Ifans.

Some ten years in preparation – van Dormael published his screenplay to Mr Nobody in book form last summer – this new project is summed up in the tag line “Nothing is real, everything is possible”.

The central character of Nemo (played by Jared Leto) is 35-years-old. He is living an ordinary life with his wife Elise and their three children until the moment when suddenly everything seems to go out of kilter: advertising placards in the street seem to be giving personal messages to him; he sees strangers who look very much like himself; he discovers a beach shoreline behind cardboard house fronts where helicopters are putting enormous pieces of the sea together. Nemo awakes. He is locked in his car which is at the bottom of a lake and he is about to drown. He awakes again and is standing in front of a stranger who is shooting a bullet into his chest. He awakes once more, by the swimming pool of a fantastic villa, with a new wife and unfamiliar children. Is everything just a dream?

“Jaco’s first film Toto le Heros was co-produced by a German colleague and I remember reading the screenplay and being so impressed and fascinated by this unique world he created,” producer Alfred Huemer recalls. “I promised myself that if I ever got the chance to make a film with him, I would want to be there.” Huemer’s chance came a year ago when he made contact with producer Philippe Godeau – whose brother he had worked with on the last three Chabrol films – and subsequently joined Marco Mehlitz as German co-producer.

“It is a major project for European standards with the budget of €35 million and wasn’t easy for us independent producers to get off the ground,” Huemer observes. “But we want to reach a large audience and the film’s goal is – in the best sense of the word – to be family entertainment and appeal to both young and old.”

Kruger adds that the film “is really like a puzzle where one puts the pieces together to make up Nemo’s life. Jaco is something of a..."
visionary because there are takes on the set the like I have never ever seen before.”

Around a third of the film’s 120 shooting days were concentrated at the Babelsberg studios and on location in Berlin. “We have shot in several studios: with a space ship in the Marlene Dietrich Halle, a hospital in the Suedhalle soundstage and two smaller sets in the FX center,” Huerner explains.

“Jaco has created his own special world and very, very precise visual ideas. The sets are in themselves not so spectacular, but it is what we do with them. In the Suedhalle, for example, we have a 160 meter long green screen and have scenes where the visual effects will then be incorporated during the post-production.”

“It is a wonderful financing element for independent producers,” Mehlitz says. “It made sense here with Mr Nobody for the State to become involved because of the scale of the project and the incredibly large volume of money coming into the region.”
“After deciding on Til for Marc, I had to see who would be most suitable as his best friend and decided on Stipe Erceg [known from The Edukators and Nothing But Ghosts]. I wanted someone who would be a good counterpole to Til,” Emcke explains. “Stipe and Til have a very different energy but both have an incredible screen-presence. There was an immediate chemistry between them when they first met and I think the audience will feel this. Stipe and Til play best friends and they have this special thing between them that people react to in real life as well.”

As Emcke points out, his friend Stephen was present during the film’s shoot as well as for the weeks of preparation “so that Til would know what it is like to walk and ride a bicycle with an artificial limb. Naturally, it was very helpful in all of the departments to be able to draw on Stephen’s experiences because everything took on an authenticity that is the strength of this film. I hope the audience will feel the sincerity: for example, the set-design of Marc’s flat contains many little items out of Stephen’s real life, like the photographs on the wall, and the production designer spent many hours with Stephen learning about his life and understanding the character.”

Emcke says that he had never really considered making the film in English even though he wrote the first draft in English to be able to show it to Stephen Sumner and has himself lived and worked in Los Angeles now for several years. “It is irrelevant for the story whether it is set in America, Italy or Germany because it is really only about the character of Marc and that is what is most interesting. After Til read the script, the project automatically took on a dynamism and then Warner Bros. came onboard.”

Looking to Germany for a company to produce Phantomenschmerz, Emcke decided on the Berlin production outfit Film 1 to handle what he describes as “a difficult project which wasn’t easy to finance despite Til in the cast. With Film 1, I have a dynamic company who were exactly the right ones because they are not afraid to push the envelope and make risky creative decisions. They are real ‘director’s producers’ and their authenticity is a great match for this story.”

Making the shift from producer to director had run pretty smoothly for Emcke, who had made the short film Ich sehe was, was Du nicht siehst ... with Phantomenschmerz’s DoP Ngo The Chau in 2005. “I often had my producer’s hat on during the preparations and one automatically slips into this role during the financing,” he explains. “But the moment the shooting starts, you are then completely the director. There are different challenges every day, but probably the greatest challenge for me on this particular film was to free myself from the real-life figure of Stephen and create a new film character which develops its own life.”

Robert Zimmermann wundert sich ueber die Liebe

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Romantic Comedy Production Company Boje Buck Produktion/Berlin, in co-production with NDR/Hamburg With backing from Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DIFFF), BKM Producers Sonja Schmitt, Claus Boje Commissioning Editor Jeanette Wuerl Director Leander Haussmann Screenplay Gernot Grickisch Director of Photography Jana Marsik Editor Mona Braeuer Production Design Udo Kramer Principal Cast Tom Schilling, Maruschka Detmers, Christian Sengwald, Annika Kuhl, Adam Oest, Marlen Diekhoff Casting Simone Baer Casting Format Super 16 mm, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 1:1.85, Dolby SRD Shooting Language German Shooting in Hamburg, September – November 2007 German Distributor Delphi Filmverleih/Berlin

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Love ... what? Hurts? Is a many splendid thing? In Robert Zimmermann wundert sich ueber die Liebe, it’s what happens to the cool, has-it-oh-so-good, video games designer, Robert Zimmermann (Tom Schilling) when, out of the blue, Cupid’s arrow hits home, hard! No sooner than he meets the 45-year-old, single parent, dry cleaning assistant, Monika (Maruschka Detmers), than he’s head over heels, in deep. Not only is he madly in love, he’s in lurve! Which, as any romantic will tell you, is what happens when a person is so convinced that the two of them are made for each other that love and life itself appear in a new light. But then Robert realizes that he first has to grasp what love means. Not only his own, but also that of Monika.

And it’s not like Robert (who owes his name to his father’s love of Bob Dylan) is the only one who’s got the love bug! Dad (played by Adam Oest) leaves his wife for an extremely younger alternative; his lesbian sister, Pia (Annika Kuhl), wants a baby; and his roommate, Ole (Christian Sengwald) is battling his way through the contact ads jungle.
Leander Haussmann is one of this issue’s featured profiles so, here are a few of the multi-award winning director’s previous works: Sonnenallee (1999, German Film Award in Silver, Best Film, among others), Herr Lehmann (2002), NVA (2004) and the recently released Warum Maenner nicht zuhoeren und Frauen schlecht einparken.

As always, Haussmann has cast his choice from both film and theatrical actors. Here, (as Monika), Maruschka Detmers makes her return to the German screen afternotching up a row of international successes. Her previous film credits include Soenke Wortmann’s St. Pauli Nacht (1999) and Mambo Kings (1992, dir: Arne Glimcher). In 1985 she won a Bambi Award for her role in Via Mala (a 3-parter for TV, dir: Tom Toelle), and for La Pirate (1984, dir: Jacques Doillon) she was nominated for the César.

Tom Schilling (Robert) is a mainstay of contemporary German cinema. His previous credits include Warum Meme nicht zuhoeren und Frauen schlecht einparken, Elementarteilchen (2005, dir: Oskar Roehler), Agnes und seine Brueder (2003, dir: Oskar Roehler), Nopola (2003, dir: Dennis Gansel), and Benjamin Quabeck’s 2002 Verschwende Deine Jugend.

If you’re already familiar with Haussmann’s house style, not to say that of production company Boje Buck, laid back observational and situational comedy, you know that this filmed version of Gernot Gricksch’s bestselling novel (Gricksch also wrote the script), is guaranteed to bring laughs, smiles and insight into this crazy little thing called love.

Leander Haussmann is one of this issue’s featured profiles so, here are a few of the multi-award winning director’s previous works: Sonnenallee (1999, German Film Award in Silver, Best Film, among others), Herr Lehmann (2002), NVA (2004) and the recently released Warum Maenner nicht zuhoeren und Frauen schlecht einparken.

As always, Haussmann has cast his choice from both film and theatrical actors. Here, (as Monika), Maruschka Detmers makes her return to the German screen afternotching up a row of international successes. Her previous film credits include Soenke Wortmann’s St. Pauli Nacht (1999) and Mambo Kings (1992, dir: Arne Glimcher). In 1985 she won a Bambi Award for her role in Via Mala (a 3-parter for TV, dir: Tom Toelle), and for La Pirate (1984, dir: Jacques Doillon) she was nominated for the César.

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Sankt Pauli – Aufbruch in den Sueden


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It was during the World Cup football championship in Germany in 2006 that Joachim Bornemann and Jan D. Gerlach had the idea for making a film about their local football club FC St. Pauli.

“After thirty years of talking, it was finally decided in summer 2006 that the stadium should be torn down and rebuilt,” recalls Bornemann, a graduate of the Production & Media Economy class at Munich’s University of Television & Film (HFF/M), who lives just 200 meters away from the stadium. “So, we got in touch with the club and explained that we wanted to make a long-term documentary focusing on the fascination of the stadium and the individual districts – the Schanzenviertel, Karoviertel and Neustadt – which are all in the immediate neighborhood. We didn’t want to make a film composed of clichés, but rather look further behind the scenes and see what is so fascinating about this place.”

The year-long shoot began with St. Pauli’s last game on 15 December 2006 in the old stadium and documented the demolition from that point on. “From April onwards, we joined the team every two or three days behind the scenes,” Bornemann explains. “In the training ground, at the briefing sessions with the coach, in the changing rooms, and the fitness studio.”

“We made a conscious decision to concentrate on the home games,” says Bornemann who is making his directorial debut with Sankt Pauli – Aufbruch in den Sueden. “We had the good fortune that an awful lot happened during the shooting. There were arguments and power struggles between the supervisory board and the presidium [led by Corny Littmann] about the demolition, and the team returned to the 2nd Bundesliga after being in the hell of the regional league.”

As Bornemann points out, he and partner Jan D. Gerlach undertook many background interviews to explore the interaction between the stadium and the people visiting it and those living in the neighborhood. “Why is this stadium always sold out at each match? It is a place where you meet your best friends and everybody has their own place,” he suggests. “There is a lot of communication between the people on the terraces and there is a really complex fan scene ranging from the unemployed through to the lawyer. The positive image here is that everyone is allowed to express their opinion; the only ones not tolerated are right-wing extremists and anything to do with right-wing radicalism is banned from the stadium.”

By focusing on different protagonists, the film is able to cast light on different aspects of the club and its relationship to its fans and the locals. Roger Hasenbein, for example, is the spokesman of St. Pauli’s official fan club, but also a streetworker in the St. Pauli and Altona districts. Meanwhile, Sven Brux, who oversees security issues at the stadium, wears several hats including those of co-founder of the fan souvenir shop, DJ at the “Jolly Roger” pub opposite the stadium and concert organizer/music manager for the club and pub. And club president Corny Littmann is naturally linked to the area through his Schmidt’s Theater on Hamburg’s famous Reeperbahn.
Meanwhile, the idea for a soundtrack featuring several local Hamburg bands came from Gerlach who approached the bands to gauge their interest. In the case of Fettes Brot, he showed them a trailer of some footage and, as luck would have it, their lead singer had already written a song about the Millerntor stadium.

But their symbiotic relationship is thrown out of balance: Ludwig strives to tighten the bonds ever closer, but Johann discovers happiness in the form of love for Ludwig’s sister, Vera. But because Ludwig hates her, the couple keeps their relationship secret. But secrets have a way of coming out and Ludwig is wounded to the core. As the finals of the rowing competition draw closer, Ludwig has already set his sights on a greater goal: to preserve their friendship forever, no longer in life, but in death.


Jakob Matschenz (Ludwig) won the Max Ophuels Award for Best Newcomer for his performance in Das Laecheln der Tiefseefische (2005, dir: Till Endemann). His other credits include Befreite Zone (2002), Rose (2005), Die Welle and Unschuld (both 2007).

Vera, the girl who lights the fuse, is played by Sophie Rogall. She also appeared in Oetzmann’s Delphinsommer, and also played alongside Mewes in Fickende Fische. For that role she was nominated for Best Actress in the 2003 German Film Awards.

Zweier ohne’s writer-director, Jobst Christian Oetzmann, here making his second theatrical feature, studied at Munich’s HFF film school. With an extensive list of credits (drama, skewed towards crime, justice and personal relationships), he has directed two Grimme Award-nominated TV movies (Schwarzer Advent, 2002, and Duell der Richter, 2003) and in 2002 he picked up the Grimme Award for the Tatort TV movie Im freien Fall. He also won the 2001 Bavarian Film Award for his first feature, Die Einsamkeit der Krokodile (also based on a book by Kurbjuweit).

**Zweier ohne**

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Drama Production Company Lichtblick Film- & Fernsehproduktion/Cologne, in co-production with Filmpool Film- & Fernsehproduktion/Cologne, WDR/Cologne With backing from Filmstiftung NRW, Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds (DFFF), Hessen Invest

Producers Joachim Ortmanns, Iris Kiefer Commissioning Editor Michael André Director Jobst Christian Oetzmann

Screenplay Jobst Christian Oetzmann

Director of Photography Tomas Erhart

Editor Cosima Schnell Music by Dieter Schleip

Production Design Peter Menne

Principal Cast Tino Mewes, Jakob Matschenz, Sophie Rogall Casting Agentur Schwarz, Susanne Ritter Casting

Special Effects TVT/Frankfurt Format 35 mm, color, cs, Dolby Digital

Shooting Language German

Shooting in Essen, Bochum, Cologne and surroundings, September – October 2007

German Distributor Stardust Filmverleih/Munich

Contact

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Emotions burn faster and hotter in the teenage years and, for a very small minority, the intensity of passion can turn to acts of destruction, on oneself and others, as witnessed by the recent spate of high school killings in the United States, Germany and, most recently, Finland.

The violence in Zweier ohne is of a different nature, but no less searing and intense for all that, because here, as so often, emotional scars are the deepest.

The film tells the story of the friendship between Johann and Ludwig as they strive for the ultimate “buddy” relationship. Going beyond,
**Zwerg Nase**

**Type of Project** TV Movie  
**Genre** Children’s Film, Family, Fairytale  
**Production Company** Kinderfilm/Erfurt, in co-production with Moviepool/Munich  
**Producers** Ingelore Koenig, Ernst Geyer, Prof. Juergen Haase  
**Commissioning Editor** Dr. Friederike Euler  
**Director** Felicitas Darschin  
**Screenplay** Felicitas Darschin, Egbert van Wyngaarden, based on the novel of the same name by Wilhelm Hauff  
**Director of Photography** Axel Block  
**Editor** Thomas Kohler  
**Production Design** Otto Kinzer  
**Principal Cast** Michael Markfort, Mechthild Grossmann, Inga Busch, Markus Majowski, Josefine Preuss, Gilbert von Sohlern, Daniel Roesner, Edda Leesch, Justus Kammerer  
**Casting** Annekathrin Heubner  
**Special Effects** Magic FX/Munich  
**Format** Super 16 mm, color, 1:1.78, Stereo  
**Shooting Language** German  
**Shooting in** Bamberg, Nuremberg, Koenigsberg, October – November 2007

Marking the feature film debut of director and co-writer Felicitas Darschin, **Zwerg Nase** originates from the pen of that classic German teller of fairytales, Wilhelm Hauff. Overshadowed as he might have been by a certain couple of Brothers Grimm, Hauff could still wield a mean quill of his own!

**Zwerg Nase** has all a cracking fairytale should have: Jakob, a young, good looking hero, aged ten; his father, a cobbler; his mother, a vegetable seller and an ugly old woman who’s really a witch (of course!) who teaches our hero, Jakob, how to cook and also changes him into an ugly dwarf.

Misshapen, unrecognized by his parents, laughed at and rejected by everyone else, Jakob makes his way to the Duke’s court where his culinary talents are welcomed with open arms. It’s when he meets Mimi, a young girl who’s been turned into a goose, that he finds someone with whom he can share his predicament.

Cue dramatic tension when the demanding Countess Wilhelmine comes to visit. Duke Alois, determined to win her hand (along with the rest of her) in marriage, orders Zwerg Nase to pull out the gastric stops. But when the lady demands he make her a pie, the recipe for which he doesn’t know, the diminutive master chef finds his life is suddenly on the line. Fortunately, Mimi, the enchanted goose, has a trick up her sleeve. Or, rather, under her wing! Cue the happy end till ever after! And for anyone still searching for the moral after all that: beauty is only skin deep, true happiness lies beneath the surface.

“The script, which I co-wrote with Egbert van Wyngaarden,” says HFF film school graduate Darschin, “has a great deal of poetical excitement and mystic atmosphere, which invites the viewer to be astounded and also share the experience. We followed Hauff’s literary tradition but have interpreted the exciting as well as psychologically deep material in a contemporary manner.”

Young Jakob/Zwerg Nase’s journey through three fascinating worlds – the everyday in the Biedermeier period, that of the witch, and the aristocratic way of life – offers something for children, parents and grandparents alike. Add an expressive visual language, a production design with a love for detail as well as an outstanding cast and you have all the ingredients for a magical cinema-experience.

**Kinderfilm**, founded in 2000, specializes in producing high-quality, stimulating films for children and young people. Previous credits include the multi-award winning Bloede Muetze! (2007), Die Blindgaenger (2004) and Wer kuesst schon einen Leguan? (2003). What Kinderfilm does not produce are dumbed-down, feature-length commercials for mass market franchises. You want quality for the kids? This is the real deal!
Introducing KODAK VISION3 500T Color Negative Film 5219/7219. The first in a new family of films for a new era of filmmaking. Featuring Kodak’s advanced Dye-Layering Technology, VISION3 500T Film delivers unprecedented performance in shadows and highlights and offers more control and flexibility from capture through post, in both digital and traditional workflows. Learn more about KODAK VISION3 Motion Picture Film at www.kodak.com/go/vision3
Welcome to Absurdistan …

Somewhere between Asia and Europe lies the God-for-saken desert village of Absurdistan, which a grand total of 14 families somehow manage to call home. For the village, the biggest problem is water … but for the village women, the biggest problem is their lazy men, who won’t lift a finger to remedy the situation.

Here, Aya and Temelko, friends since birth, have reached the age where their friendship has turned to love. Unfortunately, the date that Aya’s grandmother has determined to be ideal for their “first time” lies 4 years in the future, and to make matters worse, they must first bathe together …

When Aya stubbornly tells Temelko that he must solve the water problem before he can come anywhere near her, the village women also take up the cry “no water, no sex”, leaving the good-for-nothing men scratching their empty heads. Soon a crazy war of the sexes breaks out and they divide the town in half with barbed wire …

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Veit Helmer  
**Screenplay** Veit Helmer, Zaza Buadze, Gordan Milic, Ahmet Golbol  
**Director of Photography** George Beridze  
**Editor** Vincent Assmann  
**Music by** Shigeru Umebayashi  
**Production Design** Erwin Prib  
**Producers** Veit Helmer, Linda Kornemann  
**Production Company** Veit Helmer-Filmproduktion/Berlin, in co-production with SWR/Baden-Baden, ARTE/Strasbourg, BR/Munich  
**Principal Cast** Kristýna Maléřová, Maximilian Mauff  
**Casting** Suse Marquardt, Jessica Horváthová  
**Length** 88 min  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** Russian  
**Dubbed Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  
**Festival Screenings** Sundance 2008 (In Competition)  
**Production Backing** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, MEDIA, Filmförderung Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmförderung Bayern, German Distributor Farbfilm Verleih/Berlin  

Veit Helmer was born in 1968 and has been making films since he was 14. He studied Directing at the University of Television & Film in Munich and co-produced *A Trick of Light* by Wim Wenders. He became known for his offbeat short films which earned him more than 50 awards at numerous international film festivals. His features include *Tuvalu* (1999), which was shown at 62 festivals and won over 30 awards, *Gate to Heaven* (2003), and *Absurdistan* (2007).
It’s the night of Hannah’s 30th birthday. Her girlfriends are offering her a special present for the occasion: The girls are preparing a dinner together, and then they have one hour for each of them to invite a stranger to the dinner party. But, before they leave to find the men somewhere out there in the streets, Hannah’s mother Rita shows up surprisingly from Miami, where she normally lives. She invites herself to the dinner party and decides to stay.

What begins as a funny game, slowly turns into an open conflict, which has been long overdue between mother and daughter. It is going to be a night of changes, understanding, love and forgiveness.

Genre Tragicomedy Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Carolin Otto Screenplay Carolin Otto Director of Photography Rainer Hartmann Editor Chris von Luepke Music by Dieter Schleip, Marco Hertenstein Production Design Carsten Lippstock Producer Carolin Otto Production Company Aschenputtel-Film/Munich Principal Cast Gisela Schneeberger, Karo Guthke, Anatole Taubman, Stefan Merki, Christine Adler, Titus Horst, Sabrina Khalil, Fritz Barth Length 85 min Format HD Cam, color, 16:9 Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Mono German Distributor Aschenputtel-Film/Munich

Carolin Otto was born in 1962 in Hamburg and studied Philosophy at the University of Munich and Directing at the Munich University of Television & Film, graduating in 1993 with the film Kisses (Kuesse). Active as a screenwriter and director, her other films include: Violet Sweets (Veilchenbonbons, 1990) which received prizes from festivals in Gera, San Francisco and Magdeburg, A Beautiful Day in Hell (In der Hoelle ein schoener Tag, 1991), I Want to Dance (Ich will tanzen, 1992), The Policewoman (Pi, Die Polizistin, TV, 1997), Horsepower (Pferdestaerken, 2000), A Miracle Please! (Ein Wunder bitte!, 2004), Kant, Sophie und der kategorische Imperativ (mini-series, 2005), Hannah Arendt – Das Maedchen aus der Fremde (mini-series, 2006), and Aphrodite’s Night (Aphrodites Nacht, 2007).
A department store security guard is secretly in love with a clerk in the store’s bookshop. He secretly watches her on the video monitoring system and follows her after work. When he witnesses a seeming rival being attacked in the train, he gets off instead of helping him. Torn by guilt, the security guard’s life breaks down.

**Genre** Drama, Love Story  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Reto Caffi  
**Screenplay** Reto Caffi, Philippe Zweifel  
**Director of Photography** Piotr Rosolowski  
**Editor** Thomas Bachmann  
**Music by** Ivo Ubezio, Daniel Jakob, Oli Kuster  
**Producer** Ute Dilger  
**Production Company** Kunsthochschule fuer Medien Koeln (KHM)/Cologne  
**Principal Cast** Roeland Wiesnekker, Catherine Janke, Leonardo Nigro, Hanspeter Bader, Julie Braeuning, Roland Bonjour, André Meyer  
**Length** 30 min, 860 m  
**Format** Super 16 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German/Swiss German  
**Subtitled Versions** English, German  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  

**Festival Screenings** Kurzfilmtage Winterthur 2007 (In Competition), Hof 2007, Luenen 2007 (In Competition), Clermont-Ferrand 2008 (In Competition), Solothurn 2008 (In Competition)  
**Awards** Audience Award Luenen 2007, Swiss Film Award 2008  
**With backing from** Filmstiftung NRW, Zuercher Filmstiftung, Berner Filmstiftung, Filmbuero Bremen, Migros Kulturprozent

**Reto Caffi** was born in 1971 in Zurich. After studying in English Literature and Journalism at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, he worked as a film journalist for print, radio and television. He then studied at the Academy of Media Arts (KHM) in Cologne from 2004-2007, graduating with **On the Line (Auf der Strecke)**. He is also active as a scriptwriter and his other short films have won over 30 awards at international festivals.
“Nobody understands my name Bica when we first meet. My friend Milka started to call me Bitch instead. Beautiful Bitch.”

Bica lives in a run-down apartment in a big city, working with a gang of organized young pickpockets. She saves her share of the loot for a future life with her little brother.

When Bica steals from a man at the shopping mall, his beautiful, rich and very spoiled daughter Milka follows her. A friendship develops between the girls, but when Milka and her friends discover Bica’s job and unbearable existence, they team together to help her.

Bica’s attempt to break free from her Romanian gangster boss results in chaos, and turns her world upside down.

With her hard-earned money gone, she returns to Bucharest and discovers that her favorite part of life is being free.

**Genre** Coming-of-Age Story, Drama  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Cinema** Year of Production 2007  
**Director** Theo Martin Krieger  
**Screenplay** Theo Martin Krieger  
**Director of Photography** Andreas Hoefer  
**Editors** Brigitta Tauchner, Julia Dupuis  
**Music by** Andreas Schilling  
**Production Design** Andrea Kessler  
**Producer** Michael Eckelt  
**Production Company** Riva Film/Hamburg, in cooperation with WDR/Cologne, NDR/ Hamburg  
**Principal Cast** Katharina Derr, Patrick von Blume, Sina Tkotsch, Lucien Le Rest, Tom Lass, Aljosha Horvat, Igor Dolgatschew, Therese Haemer, Rolf Berg, Vivien La Fleur, Fahime Farzanessa, Leonie Benesch  
**Casting** Iris Baumueller, Marc Schoetteldreier  
**Length** 103 min, 2,822 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SRD  
**With backing from** FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Filmstiftung NRW, MSH Schleswig-Holstein, BK, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA)  
**German Distributor** Farbfilm Verleih/Berlin

**Theo Martin Krieger** was born in 1953 in Lingen/Ems. After studying Music, Education and Drama, he enrolled at the German Academy of Film & Television (dffb) in Berlin. Also active as a DoP, editor and screenwriter, his films include: Zischke (1986), Herz ueber Kopf (1988), and Beautiful Bitch (2007).
The young Turk Yavuz, the small-town cop Uwe, and the middle-class kids Jacob and Pelle: four people who could not be any more different. But each one of them is convinced that this 1st of May is going to change their life. Their stories rotate around and bounce off each other, driven by the determination to take what they have been missing in life. Today is their day.


Carsten Ludwig’s other films include: Nuesse (short, 1998), Wolfram (short, 1999), Mittenmang (short, 2000), Immer an der Wand lang (short, 2001), and Detroit (2003).


Jakob Ziemnicki’s other films include: Dark (1998), Der Ball ist verdammt Rund (short, 2000), Et kuett wie et kuett (short, 2002), Tompson Musik (2004), and Mairitter (TV, 2005).
The burned-out cop Parker stares a little too long into her eyes in the first moment, at the second moment recognizes gangster-lady Kim, and then in the third moment, he realizes he has become her hostage who Kim wants to use for her escape.

Kim sets off a time bomb to explode in 10 minutes, ready to blast herself to death with Parker. Facing his death, Parker starts to fight for his life realizing that he can only get 100 percent, if he gives 100 percent. Kim does everything with 100 percent, but has lost sight of her own fortune. She is a lonely woman, who finds in Parker a man who is ready to do everything for a woman.

When a special police-unit is about to break into the hotel room on the 50th floor, Parker offers her a dangerous plan for an escape, for which both have to trust each other 150 percent …

Timo Semik initially studied Acting in Hamburg and Berlin, and followed this with numerous Screenwriting seminars and a Creative Production course. After working as a stage actor and production designer, he began working on scripts and continuity for various television productions. In 2003, he founded Lessismore Pictures. His films include: Einen fuer unterwegs (short, 2003), Quiz-show (short, 2004), New New Economy (short, 2005), Sucki (2007), and Burning Cop (Bulle brennt, 2007).
Georgina Scott is a broody 33-year-old who sends her partner packing when it becomes obvious that he doesn’t share her desire for a bundle of joy. Zak was going away on a documentary shoot anyway and he hopes that she’ll cool off in his absence. But Georgina discovers that early menopause runs in her family and heads for a specialist with her reluctant best friend Clem in tow. Learning that her baby-making days are numbered and her next period will be her last, Georgina enlists the help of Clem and their camp pal, Justin, to make the most of it. A battle plan is drawn up but their escapades become increasingly frantic and elaborate as Georgina explores internet sperm donors, nightclubs, builders and funeral-goers in her desperate and hilarious attempts to beat the biological clock.

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Eric Styles  
**Screenplay** Camilla Leslie  
**Director of Photography** Ed Mash  
**Editor** Tracy Saville  
**Music by** Christian Henson  
**Production Design** Humphrey Jaeger  
**Producer** Doris Kirch  
**Co-Producer** Michel Morales  
**Associate Producer** Oliver Mahrdt  
**Production Company** Blue Angel Films/Berlin, in co-production with Miromar Entertainment/Ludwigsburg  
**Principal Cast** Heather Graham, Mia Kirschner, Tom Ellis, Will Mellor, Orlando Seale  
**Casting** Jeremy Zimmermann, Manuel Puro  
**Length** 95 min  
**Format** 35 mm, color, cs  
**Original Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SR  
**Festival Screenings** Miami 2008  
**With backing from** Northern Ireland Screen

Eric Styles studied at the National Film and Television School and the Newport Film School. He then started producing and directing documentaries and dramas for the BBC. A selection of his award-winning films includes: *Last Days at Fforchwen*, *The Dream*, *All Mixed Up*, *Birdbrain*, *Love in the House of the Lord*, *Washed Up*, *Dreaming of Joseph Lees*, *Noel Coward’s Relative Values*, *Tempo*, *True True Lie*, and *Buy Borrow Steal*.
Camilo Mejia grew up in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, as the son of the famous songwriter and Sandinista politician Carlos Mejia Godoy. To secure a better future for himself, Camilo and his mother emigrated to the USA when he was 18, where he was encouraged to join the US Army. In 2003, the last year of his obligatory military service, Camilo’s unit was deployed to Iraq, based in the especially violent Ramadi region in the Sunni triangle.

Camilo’s description of his return to the USA: “Once I returned home, I had the opportunity to put my thoughts in order. Far from the sounds of machine guns and mortars, it becomes hard not to listen to what our heart is telling us. I came face to face with my feelings about the war and the memory of each and every one of my actions. And I tried to justify my behavior, my being in Iraq in the first place. I realized I was holding myself accountable for my own behavior. When the sounds of battle are gone, the sounds of one’s own conscience takes over.”

Award-winning director Peter Lilienthal sketches a poetic and authentic portrait of a young man who has bravely spoken out against the politics of a country in which he is not even a citizen (but for which he has served as a soldier). And the wider implications of US recruitment of Latin American youths is explored.

Genre Human Rights, War & Peace Category Documentary Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Peter Lilienthal Screenplay Peter Lilienthal Director of Photography Carlos Apariclo Editor Julian Isfort Music by Seraphin Producer David P. Steel Production Company steelecht/Offenbach am Main, in co-production with Filmwerkstatt Muenster, Triangle 7/Brussels Length 86 min Format HDV, color, 1:1.78 Original Version English/Spanish Subtitled Versions English, French, German Sound Technology Dolby SR Festival Screenings International Latino Film Festival San Francisco 2007 With backing from Hessische Filmfoerderung, Filmtstiftung NRW, RTBF Belgium

Peter Lilienthal was born in 1929 in Berlin. His family emigrated to Uruguay in 1939. In 1956, he received a scholarship to the Hochschule der Kuenste (HDK) in Berlin and returned to Germany. Between 1959 and 1964 he worked at the television broadcaster SWR, first as an assistant and later as a director. In 1967/68 he was a lecturer at the German Film & Television Academy (dffb) in Berlin, and was one of the co-founders of the German distributor Filmverlag der Autoren. Since 1985, he has been director of the section Film & Media Art at the Academy of the Arts in Berlin. A selection of his films includes: In Handumdrehen verdient (1959), Malatesta (1970), Dear Mr. Wonderful (1982), The Silence of the Poet (1987), The Cyclist of San Cristóbal (1988), In the Face of the Woods (1995), and The Long Road to Disobedience (2007), among others.

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Chiko wants to get to the top. Together with his best friend Tibet, he wants to achieve power and wealth by rising through the drug milieu in his suburban Hamburg ghetto. A route that leads unavoidably via the dealer, Brownie, the undisputed king of the area. With quick wit and apparent unscrupulousness, Chiko gains Brownie’s respect – and soon becomes the Number 2 in the ghetto. When his pal Tibet deceives Brownie, Chiko also gets called to account. Now, everything that’s important to him is at stake; recognition, power and, above all, his friendship with Tibet.

Between friends and enemies, between love and hate, between life and death: Relentlessly and authentically, Chiko tells a story about a life that begins in the fast lane and ends in the abyss.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Film** Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Oezguer Yildirim  
**Screenplay** Oezguer Yildirim  
**Director of Photography** Matthias Bolliger  
**Editor** Sebastian Thuemler  
**Music by** Darko Krezic  
**Production Design** Kim Porr  
**Producers** Fatih Akin, Klaus Maek, Andreas Thiel  
**Production Company** Corazón International/Hamburg, in co-production with NDR/Hamburg  
**Principal Cast** Denis Moschitto, Moritz Bleibtreu, Volkan Oezcan, Reyhan Sahin  
**Casting** Nurhan Sekerci  
**Special Effects** Norbert Skodock  
**Length** 92 min, 2,626 m  
**Format** 16 mm  
**Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German/Turkish  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital SRD  
**Festival Screenings** Berlin 2008 (Panorama)  
**With backing from** Nordmedia, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DFFF), Kuratorium junger deutscher Film  
**German Distributor** Falcom Media Group/Berlin  
This documentary tells the unique story of Dr. Sue Hart, the first female wildlife vet in Africa doing extraordinary pioneering work by operating on wild animals in the bush under the most primitive of conditions.

The world-famous US television series *Daktari*, featuring veterinarian Marsh Tracy and the cross-eyed lion Clarence, is well-known all over the world. Sue Hart’s life was the role model behind the successful series, but this was only Hollywood.

*The Real Daktari* is a true story about a strong and determined female vet. There are hidden depths to this remarkable woman: her vision and compassion, her philosophy and teaching, her caring and humanity, her creation of the “Ecolink” for conservation, education and humanitarian causes, her romance and the love of nature. When Sue speaks, people listen! But who will care when she is no longer with us? Who will carry her great legacy forward?

**Genre** Adventure, Wildlife  
**Category** Documentary TV  
**Year of Production** 2008  
**Directors** Lara Juliette Sanders, Regina Goetze  
**Screenplay** Lara Juliette Sanders  
**Directors of Photography** Hans-Albrecht Lusznat, Peter Karl  
**Editor** Melania  
**Singer** Music by Didier Delia  
**Producers** Lara Juliette Sanders, Olivier Lombardo  
**Production Company** Lombardo Films/Munich  
**Length** 51 & 81 min  
**Format** HD, color  
**Original Version** English  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehfonds Bayern

**Lara Juliette Sanders** studied Communication Science and Business Management at the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich. After working as a journalist for various German newspapers, she then began working for the audio-visual press as a radio presenter, producer, television presenter and director. Her films include: the award-winning *Celebration of Flight* (documentary, 2007) and *The Real Daktari (Daktari – Die wahre Geschichte)*, (2008). She is currently working on her first feature film based on her book *Up and Away*.

**Regina Goetze** was born in 1967 and studied Drama, Film and Television, German Literature and Communication Studies in Munich. She began working as an assistant director after her studies and made her directorial debut in 1993 with the award-winning *Entlarvt*. Her other films include: *Diamonds in the Rough, Fast Like the Wind, Mai Girls* and numerous documentary shorts for public broadcasters.
The Eritrean struggle for independence, 1980. Ten-year-old Awet has the heart of a warrior. Abandoned as a baby, she grows up in the sheltered atmosphere of a Christian monastery in Asmara. But when she returns to her family, her father brings her to a military battle unit. There is nothing she can do to elude her fate as a child soldier. Nevertheless, Awet vows to oppose this ignoble war with all her strength, and to fight against the fate that menaces her.

Genre Drama Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2008 Director Luigi Falorni Screenplay Luigi Falorni, Gabriele Kister Director of Photography Judith Kaufmann Editor Anja Pohl Music by Andrea Guerra Production Design Vittoria Sogno Producers Andreas Bareiss, Sven Burgemeister, Gloria Burkert, Bernd Burgemeister Production Company BurkertBareiss Production by TV60 Film/Munich, in co-production with Senator Film Produktion/ Berlin, Aichholzer Film/Vienna, Beta Film/Oberhaching, in association with BR/Munich, ARTE/Strasbourg, Kenya Filmstudios/ Nairobi Principal Cast Letekidan Micael Elias, Seble Tilahun, Solomie Micael Elias, Daniel Seyoum Casting Lenny Juma, Lillian Oyugi, Bernard Safari, Betty Betlehem Abebe Special Effects Jens Doeldissen Length 92 min Format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version Tigrinya Dubbed Version German Subtitled Versions English, German Sound Technology Dolby Digital Festival Screenings Berlin 2008 (In Competition) With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DFFF), BKM, Eurimages, ORF, OFI Oesterreichisches Filminstitut, MEDIA German Distributor Senator Film Verleih/Berlin

Luigi Falorni was born in 1971 in Florence/Italy. From 1991-1992, he attended the Film Directing class of the Cooperative Schermobianco in Florence, graduating with the feature La Gabbia di Gesso (1992). He then studied at the University of Television & Film (HFF/M) in Munich from 1994 until 2003, graduating with the highly-acclaimed film The Story of the Weeping Camel (Die Geschichte vom weinenden Kamel, 2003, in co-direction with Byambasuren Davaa). Also active as a screenwriter and cinematographer, his other films as a director include: Impasse (documentary short, 1995), Fools and Heroes (documentary, 1998), Dichtung und Wahrheit (short, 1999), and Heart of Fire (Feuerherz, 2008).
Tehran in April 2006: The first official friendly match takes place between the Iranian women’s football team and a local Berlin girl’s team, in front of more than 1000 cheering female fans. The entire stadium is electric, charged with a high voltage of girl power, there is dancing and singing on the grandstand. A couple of men hang around in front of the gates, trying to sneak a peek over the fence. They are barred from entering today.

It has taken a year’s hard work for the girls of both teams to make today happen. Finally, after overcoming various obstacles, the game takes place. But these 90 minutes are about more than just a football game. The desire for self-determination and equality are being expressed here and it is clear – change is possible.

**Genre** Society, Sports, Women’s Film  
**Category** Documentary  
**Cinema** Year of Production 2007  
**Directors** Ayat Najafi, David Assmann  
**Screenplay** Ayat Najafi, David Assmann, Corinna Assmann, Valerie Assmann  
**Directors of Photography** Anne Misselwitz, Niclas Reed Middleton  
**Editor** Sylke Rohrlach  
**Music** by Niko Schabel  
**Producers** Roshanak Behesht Nedjad, Helge Albers, Patrick Merkle  
**Production Company** Flying Moon Film/ Berlin, in cooperation with Assmann/Berlin, in cooperation with RBB/Potsdam-Babelsberg, ARTE/Strasbourg  
**Principal Cast** Niloofar Basir, Narmila Fathi, Sanna El-Agha  
**Length** 86 min, 2,450 m  
**Format** HDV Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German/English/Farsi  
**Subtitled Versions** English, German  
**Sound Technology** DTS Digital  
**Festival Screenings** Berlin 2008 (Perspectives German Cinema) With backing from Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg


**David Assmann** was born in 1978 and went to school in Berlin, Heidelberg, Jerusalem, Santa Monica und Konstanz. Since 2001, he has been studying Media Dramaturgy at the University of Mainz and works on various film, theater, radio and exhibition projects.
Rainer Werner Fassbinder. Werner Herzog. Wim Wenders. Three directors whose names stand for the exodus of the West German cinema from the decades of insignificance of the post-war period. As of 1970, the blossoming of the German cinema began and caused a global sensation. For the first time since the golden age of expressionism in the 1920s, German filmmakers, whose new works receive international attention and acclaim, are back.

Interviews, film excerpts and rare, sometimes even unpublished stock footage, are woven by the filmmakers Laurens Straub and Dominik Wessely into a rise-and-fall chronicle that commands all of the elements that make a great cinematic story: Friendship. Success. Jealousy. Destruction. Death.

Laurens Straub was born in 1944 in Holland and passed away in 2007. After relocating to Germany in 1963, he studied Acting and worked as a dramaturg, assistant director and director for theater and film. In 1970, he was one of the co-founders of the Filmverlag der Autoren, and continued producing and teaching at various film academies and universities. In 1994 he founded the production company Next Film.


Genre Film History Category Documentary Cinema Year of Production 2008 Directors Laurens Straub, Dominik Wessely Screenplay Dominik Wessely, Laurens Straub, Rainer Koelmel Director of Photography Knut Schmitz Editor Anja Pohl Music by Philipp F. Koelmel Producer Rainer Koelmel Production Company Kinowelt Filmproduktion/Munich, in co-production with Filmverlag der Autoren/Leipzig, BR/Munich, ARTE/Strasbourg, WDR/Cologne With Michael Fengler, Hark Bohm, Alexander Kluge, Peter Fleischmann, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Uwe Brandner, Hans W. Geissendoerfer, Wim Wenders, Werner Herzog Length 120 min Format HDV Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.78 Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby SR With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA) German Distributor Kinowelt Filmverleih/Leipzig

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Christoph, 31, dissatisfied author of trashy novels, jobs at a car rental company to survive. His desire to write an authentic and meaningful crime novel will change his life in a rather different way than originally planned. Because it turns out that his object of study, Dom, 32, who is the gofer for Chico, the king of the local gangster milieu, is not the exciting research subject that Christoph had hoped he had found for his novel – far from it!

*Genre* Comedy  
*Category* Feature Film  
*Cinema* Cinema  
*Year of Production* 2008  
*Director* Christian Zuebert  
*Screenplay* Christian Zuebert  
*Director of Photography* Jules van den Steenhoven  
*Editor* Hans Funck  
*Music by* Lee Buddah  
*Production Design* Andrea Kessler  
*Producers* Tom Spiess, Soenke Wortmann  
*Production Company* Little Shark Entertainment/Cologne, in co-production with WDR/Cologne, ARTE/Strasbourg, German Filmproduction GFP/Berlin  
*Principal Cast* Lucas Gregorowicz, Wotan Wilke Moehring, Justus von Dohnányi, Anna Dereszowska  
*Casting* Filmcast Sabine Schwedhelm  
*Length* 92 min, 2,517 m  
*Format* 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
*Original Version* German  
*Sound Technology* Dolby Digital  
*With backing from* Filmstiftung NRW, Deutscher Filmfonds (DFFF), Filmförderungsaustalt (FFA), BKM, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg  
*German Distributor* Universum Film/Munich  

Christian Zuebert was born in 1973 in Wuerzburg. Since 1997, he has concentrated on scriptwriting and has written numerous screenplays for film and television. Soenke Wortmann took up contact with him upon recommendation, and after receiving Zuebert’s script for *Lammbock – Shit Happens* (*Lammbock – Alles in Handarbeit*, 2001), convinced him to take over direction of the film, making *Lammbock* his directorial debut, followed by *Echte Maenner* (2002), *The Treasure of the White Falcons* (*Der Schatz der weissen Falken*, 2004), and *Hardcover* (2008). He has also co-written the scripts for the films *Fandango*, *Girls on Top* (*Maedchen Maedchen*), and *Red Zora* (*Rote Zora*), among others.
Nic, an eclectic 23-year-old young man is waiting in Bangkok for his lost luggage. Whilst searching for the necessities of daily life, he is pulled into Bangkok. Like Alice in Wonderland, he stumbles with curiosity through a world unknown to him.

When Nic meets Coco, her spirit reminds him of a person he once knew in his childhood. He starts to remember his almost forgotten past and begins his journey to look for his “House of Wishes”. Nic is mesmerized by Coco and a love story begins …

Paper Bird is a story about love, lost childhood, and the search for one’s own way in life.

Genre Drama, Love Story Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Vanessa van Houten Screenplay: Vanessa van Houten, Natalie Lambsdorff, Korbinian Greiner Director of Photography Philipp Kirsamer Editor Susanne Hartmann Music by Coco Rosie Production Design Andrew Perry Producers Danny Krausz, Gerd Huber

Production Company Dor Film-West/Munich, in co-production with BR/Munich, Hochschule fuer Fernsehen und Film Muenchen (HFF/M)/Munich

Principal Cast Thomas Fraenzel, Tschagsalmaa Borchuu, Lars Rudolph

Length 101 min Format 16 mm Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85

Original Version German/English/Thai Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby SR

Festival Screenings Goa 2007, Chennai 2007

With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern

Heinz and Fred, father (70) and son (25) live beneath the same roof in the village of Ahlsdorf in central Germany. They are inseparable and live in a huge realm where they have already restored numerous very old and broken machines. Signs of past and future work are all over the place. They work without intending to use the restored products. They get up together every morning at 6 o’clock and go to bed early after a day of hard work.

Heinz is an old ruler, full of experience and trust. He is strict but also humorous. Having reached the retirement age, he thinks about his succession, too, the inheritance of his life. And Fred? He lives in two worlds. On the one hand, in the small kingdom of screws and metal that he wants to take over some day. On the other hand, in his almost ordinary life as a young man.

Heinz and Fred tells a story about self-determination and the quest for the meaning of life. The life of Heinz and Fred is deprived of the norms and expectations of a world which is coined by discussions about low-paid jobs, unemployment, and the demands of a mobile and hectic working world.

Genre Society Category Documentary Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Mario Schneider Screenplay Mario Schneider Directors of Photography Peter Badel, Mario Schneider Editor Mario Schneider, René Froelke, Gudrun Steinbrueck-Plenert Music by CorneliuS Renz, Mario Schneider Producer Thomas Jeschner Production Company 42film/ Halle, in co-production with MDR/Leipzig Principal Cast Heinz Reichwald, Fred Reichwald Length 80 min Format HD Blow-up 35 mm, color, 16:9 Original Version German and regional dialects Subtitled Versions English, German Sound Technology Stereo Festival Screenings Leipzig 2007 With backing from Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, Land Sachsen-Anhalt

Mario Schneider was born in 1970 in Neindorf. After studying Music, Philosophy and Art History, he worked with Harold Faltermeyer on several film scores. In 1999, he received a diploma as a film composer and began working as a director, author and composer. In addition to his work with Faltermeyer, he has composed soundtracks for numerous television series and feature films. His films as a director include: Helbra (2003), Heinz and Fred (2007), and his upcoming feature film project Opus 9 (2008).
Marie accidentally discovers that her husband and the father of her two children is leading a double life. He has two of everything: two wives, two homes and two families. As soon as night falls, Marie leaves her home and secretly follows her husband to a masked ball. She is looking for consolation, for explanations. After daybreak, she will know whether she can face this new reality and return to her children …

Genre Drama Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Nicolette Krebitz Screenplay Nicolette Krebitz Director of Photography Bella Halben Editor Sara Schilde Music by Fetisch, Whitest Boy Alive, and others Production Design Christel Rehm, Sylvester Koziolik Producer Tom Tykwer Production Company X Filme Creative Pool/Berlin, in co-production with NDR/Hamburg Principal Cast Nina Hoss, Devid Striesow, Franziska Petri, Marc Hosemann, Otto Sander, Monica Bleibtreu, Angelika Taschen, Jonathan Meese, Guenther Maria Halmer Casting Ingeborg Molitoris Length 86 min, 2,359 m Format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby SRD Festival Screenings Hof 2007, Rotterdam 2008, Goeteborg 2008, Berlin 2008 (German Cinema) Awards Schleswig-Holstein Film Award 2007 (Best Screenplay) With backing from FilmFoerderung Hamburg, MSH Schleswig-Holstein, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), BKM German Distributor X Verleih/Berlin

Nicolette Krebitz is an award-winning actress, writer, musician and director. Her films as a director include: Jeans (2001), Mon Cherie (2001), and The Heart is a Dark Forest (Das Herz ist ein dunkler Wald, 2007).

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Hundreds of thousands of Africans head to Europe every year. They flee from poverty, political persecution or war, thereby often risking their life. Only very few manage to enter an EU country.

Fela, Karim, Rachid and Daren made it to Germany and thought they had reached the destination of their dreams. But instead, they are confronted with restrictive asylum laws and their consequences. On the edge of society, they live and work illegally in Berlin and are subjected almost daily to police identity checks and the subsequent punishments. The only way out for them is to find a German woman to marry.

They are slowly realizing that they have not only given up their homeland for their life in Europe, but are bit by bit also losing their identity and dignity. Dreams of a normal life seem unreachable and the only feelings left are resignation, anger and desperation. However, to their families in Africa they continue to say that they have arrived and live in ‘Paradise Europe’.

Carla Gunnesch was born in 1974 in Bucharest/Romania and grew up in Heidelberg and Cologne. She studied Economics in Berlin and London while also attending seminars for further education in Cinematography in Hamburg and Cologne. She is also active as a screenplay editor and freelance author.
Only Trudi knows that her husband Rudi is suffering from a terminal illness. It is up to her to tell him or not. The doctor suggests that they do something together, perhaps something they were long planning to do ... Trudi decides not to tell her husband about the gravity of his illness and to follow the doctor’s advice. She convinces Rudi to visit their children and grandchildren in Berlin. But once they arrive, they realize that their children are so busy with their own lives that they have no time for them. Then, suddenly, Trudi dies. Rudi is devastated and has no idea what to do next. From his daughter’s girlfriend he learns that Trudi’s love for him had led her to forego the life that she had wanted to live. He begins to see her with new eyes and vows to make up for her lost life. And so he embarks on his last journey – to Tokyo, in the midst of the cherry blossom festival, a celebration of beauty, impermanence and new beginnings ...

Genre Drama Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2008 Director Doris Doerrie Screenplay Doris Doerrie Director of Photography Hanno Lentz Editors Inez Regnier, Frank Mueller Music by Claus Bantzer Producers Molly von Fuerstenberg, Harald Kuegler Associate Producers Patrick Zorer, Ruth Stadler Production Company Olga Film/ Munich, in co-production with BR/Munich, ARD Degeto Film/ Frankfurt, ARTE/Strasbourg Principal Cast Elmar Wepper, Hannelore Elsner, Nadja Uhl, Aya Irizuki, Maximilian Brueckner, Birgit Minichmayr, Felix Eitner, Floriane Daniel, Tadashi Endo Length 122 min, 3,489 m Format HD Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German/English/Japanese Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby Stereo Festival Screenings Berlin 2008 (In Competition) With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Deutscher Filmförderfonds (DFFF) German Distributor Majestic Filmverleih/Berlin

Doris Doerrie was born in Hanover. After studying Acting, Philosophy and Psychology in the USA, she studied at the University of Television & Film in Munich, where she runs the creative writing department today. In addition to directing, she is a celebrated novelist. Her award-winning films include: Straight Through the Heart (Mitten ins Herz, 1983), Inside the Belly of the Whale (Im Innern des Wals, 1984), Men (Maenner, 1985), Paradise (Paradies, 1986), Me and Him (Ich und er, 1988), Money (Geld, 1989), Happy Birthday! (Happy Birthday, Tuerkel, 1992), Nobody Loves Me (Keiner liebt mich, 1994), Am I Beautiful? (Bin ich schoen?, 1998), Enlightenment Guaranteed (Erleuchtung garantiert, 2000), “Naked” (Nackt, 2002), The Fisherman and His Wife – Why Women Never Get Enough (Der Fischer und seine Frau – Warum Frauen nie genung bekommen, 2005), How to Cook Your Life (2007), and Cherry Blossoms – Hanami (Kirschblueten – Hanami, 2008).
Edeltraut Hertel brings children to the world. For some 20 years, she has been working as a midwife in her hometown of Meerane, a sleepy, small town near Chemnitz. In this Saxon province, tucked away from the focus of the world, a war is taking place among numerous health policy representatives. The film brings to light the problems of modern day society, affected by migration and declining birth rates. In this small micro-cosmos, rivaling sides are fighting to win the favor of the offspring of this small town: technically-equipped hospital doctors, alternative and relaxed “birthing house” representatives, and experienced midwives.

With a sense for bizarre humor and pointed remarks, Long Journey Into the Light tells the story of this hunt for lost treasures …

**Genre**  Society  
**Category**  Documentary Cinema  
**Year of Production**  2007  
**Director**  Douglas Wolfsperger  
**Screenplay**  Douglas Wolfsperger  
**Director of Photography**  Igor Luther  
**Editor**  Jean-Marc Lesguillons  
**Music by**  Gerd Baumann  
**Producer**  Douglas Wolfsperger  
**Production Company**  Douglas Wolfsperger Filmproduktion/Berlin, in co-production with 3sat/Mainz, WDR/Cologne  
**Length**  100 min  
**Format**  HD  
**Blow-up**  35 mm, color, cs  
**Original Version**  German  
**Subtitled Version**  English  
**Sound Technology**  Dolby SR  
**With backing from**  Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MEDIA

Douglas Wolfsperger was born in 1957 in Zurich/Switzerland as a German national and grew up on Lake Constance. After freelance work at SWF in Baden-Baden and WDR in Cologne, he works today as a writer and director. His films include: Die Begegnung der Jungfrau Maria mit John Travolta und deren Folgen (short, 1978), the features Lebe Kreuz und Sterbe Quer (1985), Kies (1986), Probefahrt ins Paradies (1992), Heirate mir! (1999), the award-winning documentary Bellaria – As Long As We Live! (Bellaria – so lange wir leben!, 2001), Riders of the Sacred Blood (Die Blutritter, 2003), Did You Ever Fall in Love with Me? (War’n Sie schon mal in mich verliebt?, 2005), and Long Journey Into the Light (Der lange Weg ans Licht, 2007).
Lea is in her mid-twenties. Her parents finance her student life, which is colored by boredom and affluence. With no foothold and no direction, Lea is letting herself drift. To escape the emptiness of her life, she is continually testing the limits.

A brief meeting with Lukas results in a closeness that is new for Lea. At first, Lukas is prepared to follow Lea unquestioningly and they go to the deserted house of Lea’s grandfather. Here, time seems to have stood still. Surrounded by memories of a bygone time, Lea and Lukas try to find a way to connect with each other.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2008  
**Director** Steffi Niederzoll  
**Screenplay** Steffi Niederzoll  
**Director of Photography** Steph Ketelhut  
**Editor** Rita Schwarze  
**Music by** Herwig Zamernik  
**Production Design** Katrin Kersten  
**Production Company** Kunstschule fuer Medien Koeln (KHM)/Cologne  
**Principal Cast** Alma Leiberg, Martin Kiefer, Ruth Froehner, Kerstin Gaehte, Volker Buedts, Dominik Klingberg  
**Length** 45 min  
**Format** Super 16 mm, color, 1:1.78  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Stereo  
**Festival Screenings** Berlin 2008 (Perspectives German Cinema) With backing from Filmstiftung NRW, Jugend fuer Europa

Nina goes to Law School. Usually she has sex. She asks herself why. In fact, she is seeking love.

**Genre** Drama, Love Story  **Category** Short  **Year of Production** 2007  **Director** Christina Schiewe  **Screenplay** Christina Schiewe, Petra Schroeder  **Director of Photography** Julia Baumann  **Editors** Hildegard Schroeder, Andy Fetscher  **Music by** Steven Schwalbe, Rami A. Regeb  **Production Design** Sascha Hilker  **Producer** Natascha Imfeld  **Production Company** Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg/Ludwigsburg  **Principal Cast** Henriette Mueller, Martin Kiefer, Johannes Suhm, Stephan Grossmann, Petra Nadolny, Winfried Huebner, Markus Sieber  **Casting** Uwe Buenker  **Length** 36 min  **Format** HD Cam  **Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 16:9  **Original Version** German  **Subtitled Versions** English, French  **Sound Technology** Stereo  **Festival Screenings** Clermont-Ferrand 2008 (In Competition)


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*Lissi and the Emperor Franz* are a dashing couple in a dazzling world. A world so wholesome and harmonious, some of us might find it almost unsettling. Everything is perfect. They have money to burn and enough chocolate truffles to play golf with. Occasionally, they have some governing and some representing to do, but it’s pretty much all good in Lissi and Franz’s world.

Until dark clouds begin to loom on the otherwise blissfully blue sky, because Lissi, the Empress, has been abducted. Immediately, albeit without a trace to follow, the ever so fearless Franz, accompanied by his field marshal and his overbearingly royal mother, sets out in hot pursuit of the kidnappers. Thankfully he soon happens upon fragments of a message which Lissi has been able to leave along the way. However, the content of the message, as far as it can be reconstructed, comes as quite the shock to Franz!

But Franz does not resign and reacts as any emperor of his disposition would: he goes nuts! And so, a wild chase ensues that doesn’t stop at the border of his empire but leads him to the remotest corners of Bavaria where it culminates in the action-packed finale of *Lissi and the Wild Emperor*.

**Genre** Animation, Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Michael “Bully” Herbig  
**Screenplay** Michael “Bully” Herbig, Alfons Biedermann  
**Animation Director** Peter Kaboth  
**Music by** Ralf Wengenmayr  
**Production Design** Rainer Stock  
**Producer** Michael “Bully” Herbig  
**Executive Producer** Michael Waldleitner  
**Production Company** herbX film/Munich  
**Voices of** Michael “Bully” Herbig, Rick Kavanian, Christian Tramitz, Lotte Ledl, Waldemar Kobus, Badesalz  
**Length** 85 min, 2,326 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, cs  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Stereo 5.1  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderungsgesellschaft (FFA)  
**German Distributor** Constantin Film Verleih/Munich

Michael “Bully” Herbig studied Photography and is well-known on the German comedy scene as a writer, director and producer. He has appeared in various TV specials and is author, actor, director and producer of the comedy show *bullyparade*. He had his feature film directorial debut with the comedy *Erkan & Stefan* (1999). In 2000, he founded the production company herbX film, whose first project was the box office hit *Manitou’s Shoe* (2001), followed by *Dreamship Surprise – Period 1* (2004), *Bully & Rick* (2006-2007), and *Lissi and the Wild Emperor* (2007).
Between what one is and what one could be lies nothing less than a thought.

As a matter of fact Jakob is a woman. But in order to prevent the village from being haunted by bad luck, the superstitious community forces her to live as a man.

Jakob never questioned her role, not until the day Tom arrived. Even though Tom is branded as an outcast, she offers him work and shelter. And despite the forceful surveillance of the community, they slowly become closer. A closeness the village seeks to prevent – at any cost …

**Genre** Drama, Love Story  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Bettina Eberhard  
**Screenplay** Bettina Eberhard  
**Director of Photography** Klaus Betzl  
**Editor** Rita Schwarze  
**Music by** Gerriet K. Sharma  
**Production Design** Meike Eckstein  
**Producer** Andreas Koon  
**Production Company** Kunst Hochschule fuer Medien Koeln (KHM)/Cologne

**Principal Cast** Ulrike Schwab, Till Firit, Heiner Stadelmann, Klaus Heindl  
**Length** 34 min, 969 m  
**Format** Super 16 mm  
**Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 1:1.66  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  
**Festival Screenings** Locarno 2007, Berlin 2008 (Perspectives German Cinema)  
**With backing from** Filmstiftung NRW, Bundesamt fuer Kultur Schweiz, Migros Kulturprozent

**Bettina Eberhard** was born in Zurich. She studied Fine Arts at Goldsmiths’ College in London and lived and worked as an artist and production designer in London and Madrid. She is part of the artist group Drater! and has exhibited her work all around Europe. She then studied at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne, graduating in 2007 with **Star-Crossed (Lostage, 2007)**. Her other films include: the shorts **Shady Stories** (2001), **The Deed** (2002), and **Fahle Orte** (2006).
Sara is a happy woman. She loves Jan, her fourth husband, and her hodgepodge of a family which includes her three children by three men and Jan’s son from his first marriage. For their Christmas celebrations, Sara has invited all their Exes, complete with new partners and assorted children. Jan is far from pleased, but before he can avert the looming disaster, everybody is already knocking on their door. The evening runs its course, with small jibes and lots of spite, with male bonding in the sauna and petty jealousies. Secrets are uncovered, misunderstandings multiply. And as the icing on the Christmas pudding, Sara announces in front of the whole company what her present for Jan will be: She is pregnant! Too bad Jan cannot be the father and even worse that Sara doesn’t know that …

**Genre** Comedy

**Category** Feature Film Cinema

**Year of Production** 2007

**Director** Vanessa Jopp

**Screenplay** Monica Rolfner

**Director of Photography** Hans Fromm

**Editor** Brigitta Tauchner

**Music by** Loy Wesselburg

**Production Design** Peter Menne

**Producer** Manuela Stehr

**Production Company** X Filme Creative Pool/Berlin, in co-production with WDR/Cologne, ARTE/Strasbourg, ARTE France Cinema/Paris, Label Télé/Issy Les Moulineaux, in collaboration with Filmrance International/Stockholm

**Principal Cast** Martina Gedeck, Heino Ferch, Jasmin Tabatabai, Roeland Wiesnekker, Rosa Enskat, Andreas Windhuis, Ursula Doll, Matthias Matschke, Meret Becker, Rainer Sellien, Alexandra Neldel, Bjarne Ingmar Maedel, Feo Aladag, Petra Kelling, Eva Loebau

**Casting** Simone Baer

**Special Effects** Snow Business, Lucien Stephenson

**Length** 92 min, 2,524 m

**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85

**Original Version** German

**Subtitled Version** English

**Sound Technology** Dolby SRD

**Festival Screenings** Hof 2007 With backing from Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, RBB, Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds (DFFF), Filmstiftung NRW, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), BKM

**German Distributor** X Verleih/Berlin

Vanessa Jopp, born in 1971, studied at the University of Television & Film (HFF/M) in Munich from 1993-1999. After shooting several films on video, she directed her first short on film, *Aquavitae*, in 1994. This was followed by *Alpaliens* (short, 1995), *One Night Suicide* (short, 1996) and *This is a True Story About a Puker on the Roof* (short, 1997). She has also made some music videos and has worked for the comedy show *Wochenshow*. Her other films include: co-direction with six other HFF/M students on *Honolulu* (1999), her award-winning first feature *Forget America (Vergiss Amerika, 2000)*, *Engel + Joe* (2001), *Happy as One (Komm Naeher, 2005)*, and *Messy Christmas (Meine schoene Bescherung, 2007)*.

**World Sales**

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A film screening on an improvised screen 1,200 kilometers east of Addis Ababa in the middle of the wilderness: Reception by the Emperor of Austria. Cinema makes it possible. For the first time, the audience sees their real-life hero in a completely different role: on the big screen, as an actor, as the Emperor of Austria, together with Romy Schneider.

Karlheinz Boehm, the star of some of the most successful German-language film productions (Sissi), found his calling and a new home as a helper and benefactor for the poor in Ethiopia, where they know him as Mr. Karl.

This is the true story of a famous actor, his work with Fassbinder and Michael Powell, the tragedy of Africa in a globalized world, and the courage that one man had to change his own life for the well-being of others.

**Genre** Biopic  
**Category** Documentary  
**Year of Production** 2008  
**Director** Kurt Mayer  
**Screenplay** Kurt Mayer, Peter Dollinger  
**Directors of Photography** Helmut Wimmer, Harald Cremer  
**Editor** Britta Nahler  
**Producers** Arno Ortmair, Margit Chuchra, Dieter Pochlatko  
**Production Company** Film-Line/Munich, in co-production with mm-production/Munich, epo-film/Vienna, ZDF/Mainz  
**With** Karlheinz Boehm, Almaz Boehm, Katharina Boehm, Gudula Blau, Michael Ballhaus  
**Length** 90 min  
**Format** HD Cam, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Salzburg Foerderung, Cine-Styria, Austrian Film Institute, ORF

Kurt Mayer was born in 1951 in Vienna. After studying Psychology, Sociology and Art History, he began working for theater and film productions, including making numerous documentaries for German and Austrian public broadcasters.
David, a young German soldier, returns home to the Black Forest after a mission in Afghanistan. Welcomed home by his girlfriend Kirsten, his friends and family, David, like the rest of his surroundings, doesn’t really want to think about whether or not the mission was nothing more than a successfully completed adventure. But the things he experienced and his own brutal actions have changed David. The distraction that he is trying to suppress turns his relationship to his younger brother Benni into one oscillating between a mere game and violence. David spends a lot of time with Benni and teaches him to deal with his fears using methods he learned during his mission. As David becomes less and less capable of dealing with his own traumatic experiences, his relationship to Benni escalates.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** TV Movie  
**Year of Production** 2008  
**Director** Brigitte Maria Bertele  
**Screenplay** Johanna Stuttman  
**Director of Photography** Mathias Prause  
**Editor** Stephan Krumbiegel  
**Music by** Christian Biegai  
**Production Design** Stephanie Brenner  
**Producers** Didi Danquart, Boris Michalski

**Production Company** Noirfilm/Karlsruhe, in co-production with SWR/Baden-Baden  
**Principal Cast** Hanno Koffler, Petra Schmidt-Schaller, Jona Ruggaber  
**Casting** Suse Marquardt  
**Length** 90 min  
**Format** Super 16 mm Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** DTS Stereo  
**Festival Screenings** Berlin 2008 (Forum)  

**With backing from** MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg

**Brigitte Maria Bertele** studied Acting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Ulm, followed by Master Classes in New York, Moscow and Berlin. After engagements at theaters across Germany, she studied Directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg in Ludwigsburg, during which time she participated in exchange programs in Albania and Argentina. Her films include: **Umbrueche** (1996), **Carlfelder Atem** (2002), **Platzverweis** (2002), **Annaeherungen an Alice** (2002), **Das Verhoer** (2002), and **Night Before Eyes** (Nacht vor Augen, 2008).
The romantic, breathtaking landscape of the Mediterranean coast in the 1930s: After the death of his mother, 12-year-old Branko goes looking for his father, a traveling fiddler, in a nearby coastal town, but his father is long gone. When Branko snatches a fish from the local market, he gets nabbed by fish merchant Karaman – only to be freed by 14-year-old Red Zora, the leader of a gang of outlaw orphan kids with a hideout in the ruins of a castle. Chased by the rich kids of the town’s well-to-do families, Karaman and the local police, Zora’s gang strikes back with ingenuity and camaraderie. Zora begins to discover her feelings for Branko, while he has a crush on the beautiful, violin-playing Zlata – who turns out to be the daughter of the mayor Ivekovic. The gang on the run soon finds its future at stake in the greatest adventure of their lives.

Red Zora is a star-studded German adaptation of the beloved international youth cult novel.

**Genre** Family  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Peter Kahane  
**Screenplay** Christian Zuebert, Peter Kahane, Ronald Kruschak  
**Photography** Dragan Rogulj  
**Editor** Gudrun Steinbrueck-Plenert  
**Music by** Detlef F. Petersen  
**Production Design** Aleksandar Denic  
**Producers** Malte Grunert, Ronald Kruschak, Claudia Schroeder  
**Production Company** Studio Hamburg Produktion/Hamburg, in co-production with Sonet Film/Stockholm, NDR/Hamburg, ARRI Film & TV/Munich, Studio Hamburg Distribution & Marketing/Hamburg, Studio Hamburg Traumfabrik/Hamburg  
**Principal Cast** Mario Adorf, Linn Reusse, Jakob Knoblauch, Dominique Horwitz, Ben Becker  
**Casting** Heta Mantscheff, Patrick Dreikauss  
**Length** 99 min, 2,859 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital 5.1 With backing from FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), MSH Schleswig-Holstein, BKM, Film I Vaest  

Peter Kahane was born in 1949 in Prague. After studying Languages, he worked as an assistant director for the DEFA and studied Directing at the Academy of Film & Television in Potsdam-Babelsberg. Also active as a screenwriter, his films include: *Ete und Ali* (1980), *Weiberwirtschaft* (1983), *Die Architekten* (1990), *Cosimas Lexikon* (1992), and *Red Zora* (*Rote Zora*, 2007).
Blacksheep is about urban Berlin lifestyle. About a bunch of hopeless losers who are trying to get the big money with the strangest plans. There is an ex-hand model for Rolex who wants to seduce a yuppie girl and cheat his insurance company. There is an East-German woman and her drunken artist boyfriend playing the lottery. Some satanists who are planing a ritual with their grandmother. Two young anarchists who are testing a new kind of ego-economy. And last, but not least, three horny Turkish boys who are stealing cash to meet a prostitute. A light-hearted, stylish comedy in an electric Berlin, full of surreal moments. About material illusions and true love.

Genre Black Comedy Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2006 Director Oliver Rihs Screenplay Oliver Rihs, Olivier Kolb, David Keller, Michael Sauter, Daniel Young, Thomas Hess Director of Photography Olivier Kolb Editors Sarah Clara Weber, Andreas Radtke Music by King Khan, Ramon Orza Production Design René Roemert, Jochen, Sauer Producers Olivier Kolb, Oliver Rihs Production Company koboiFILM/Berlin, in co-production with Oliwood Productions/Staefa Principal Cast Jule Boewe, Milan Peschel, Jenny Deimling, Robert Lohr, Marc Hosemann, Bruno Cathomas, Robert Stadlober, Tom Schilling, Daniel Krauss, Hassan Kassab, Olga Kolb

Special Effects Olivier Kolb, Franziska Puppe Length 94 min Format DV Cam, HDTV Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85


Oliver Rihs was born 1971 in Maennedorf near Zurich/Switzerland. After a foundation course at Zurich’s Design College he completed an apprenticeship as a graphic designer and worked as a freelancer in both advertising and cultural production. He simultaneously gained his first experience in film whilst working as an assistant in advertising film production, accompanied by intensive autodidactic study of film theory, analysis and history. He ended his design career in 1996 and became a social worker. Concurrently he realized his first video works, gained experience as an AD and on-set manager during various film productions whilst creating different documentary features as a freelancer. His short Lillien won Best Short at Locarno in 1997. Since 1999, he has been living and working in Zurich and Berlin, where he wrote the script for his first feature film Brombeerchen, which was realized in 2001. His other films include: Ricard, Fremder Da Draussen, Auszeit, and Dagmars Plan.
The idea just was there. Like it happens with ideas, with good ones and with bad ones. Just a plain sentence: I bet you cannot kill a human being.

On a Sunday like any other Sunday in 1996, actually an ordinary Sunday in a small town, Adam and Tommek meet their friends at the square in their neighborhood. But this Sunday will end differently than any other. Out of boredom comes a bet. The stakes? A human life.

Seven Days Sunday is a feature film based on true facts. A film telling the story of two 16-year-old boys who commit a murder on an innocent human being.

**Genre** Drama  **Category** Feature Film  **Cinema Year of Production** 2007  **Director** Niels Laupert  **Screenplay** Niels Laupert  **Director of Photography** Christoph Dammast  **Editor** Hansjoerg Weissbrich  **Music by** Michael Heilrath  **Production Design** Matthias Friedrich  **Producers** Thomas Bartl, Alexander Dierbach, Niels Laupert  **Production Company** Bartl Laupert Dierbach Filmproduktion/Munich

**Principal Cast** Ludwig Trepte, Martin Kiefer, Jil Funke, Karin Baal, Jennifer Ulrich, Lenn Kudrjawizki, Andreas Schmidt-Schaller  **Casting** Jacqueline Rietz  **Length** 80 min, 2,280 m  **Format** Super 35 mm, color, cs  **Original Version** German  **Subtitled Version** English  **Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  **Festival Screenings** Munich 2007, Biberach 2007, Mainz 2007, Solothurn 2008, Rotterdam 2008  **Awards** Mentor Award 2007, Special Mention Biberach 2007, 3rd Place Audience Award Mainz 2007  **With backing from** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA)  **German Distributor** Farbfilm Verleih/Berlin

Niels Laupert was born in 1975 in Frankfurt am Main. He studied Production & Media Management and Film & Television Directing at the University of Television & Film in Munich. He is also active as a producer. After directing numerous music videos and commercials, Seven Days Sunday (Sieben Tage Sonntag, 2007) marks his feature directorial debut.
Trip to Asia tells the story of the struggle between the individual and community, the timeless search for harmony within oneself and with one’s neighbors: A unique musical excursion into the overlapping spheres of melancholy, enthusiasm, loneliness and yearning, an adventure told through fascinating cinematic imagery brought together with a dynamic sound and musical experience that creates this universal story of humankind and society into a breathtaking motion picture experience.

Director Thomas Grube and his accomplished film crew accompany the Berlin Philharmonic on a concert tour into six pulsating, dynamic Asian metropolises, juxtaposing centuries-old traditions against the breathtaking speed of Asian modernization. An inspired examination of the cultural clash between western traditions and far-eastern philosophy, between the modernity of Europe and Asia, this compelling new film takes audiences on a journey into the confidential and private inner life of one of the world’s leading orchestras: a backstage pass into the complicated lives of the artists and diverse musical personalities within this distinguished community.

Genre: Art, Music
Category: Documentary Cinema
Year of Production: 2008
Director: Thomas Grube
Screenplay: Thomas Grube
Directors of Photography: René Dame, Anthony Dod Mantle, Alberto Venzago
Editor: Martin Hoffmann
Producers: Uwe Dierks, Thomas Grube, Andrea Thilo
Production Company: Boomtown Media/Berlin
Length: 108 min, 3,068 m
Format: HD Cam Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85
Original Version: German/English/Spanish/Chinese
Subtitled Versions: English, German
Sound Technology: Dolby Digital SRD
Festival Screenings: Berlin 2008 (Berlinale Special)
With backing from Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), BKM
German Distributor: Piffi Medien/Berlin

Two young men have to spend five days and five nights together on a rooftop in Berlin’s Mitte district to get an exclusive view of the most famous couple of the universe. They are as far apart from each other as the Odd Couple, but they need to get along with each other for 120 hours.

One is Maik Tremper, a professional paparazzo with residences in London and Monte Carlo; the other is Momme Ulmer, a lifeguard and film projectionist from a small island in the North Sea. Two worlds collide and tension mounts between the hard-nosed photographer and the love-stricken fan. Could this really be the beginning of a wonderful friendship?

During the course of their 120 hours together, the two young men accidentally meet six very different women and everything turns out differently than Maik and Momme had expected or hoped for. They both have changed by the end of their summer adventure.

**Waiting for Angelina** is a contemporary urban comedy of manners and a satiric look at the current international celebrity cult and the hardships of surviving one week in Berlin.

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2008  
**Director** Hans-Christoph Blumenberg  
**Screenplay** Hans-Christoph Blumenberg  
**Director of Photography** Klaus Peter Weber  
**Editor** Florentine Bruck  
**Production Design** Hans-Christoph Blumenberg  
**Production Company** Feuerland Filmproduktion/Hamburg  
**Producer** Hans-Christoph Blumenberg  
**Principal Cast** Florian Lukas, Kostja Ullmann, Barbara Auer, Anna Brueggemann, Gudrun Landgrebe, Leslie Malton, Jana Pallaske, Joerdis Triebel  
**Length** 86 min  
**Format** Mini DV Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SR  
**With backing from** Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein

Hans-Christoph Blumenberg was born in Lychen/Mark Brandenburg in 1947 and studied History and German in Cologne and Washington, D.C. He worked for many years as a film critic for Die Zeit and Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger and has written books on Howard Hawks, Robert Siodmak and cinema under the Third Reich. He also directed 23 documentaries for television from 1970-1982 about cinema. In 1984, he made his feature directorial debut with Tausend Augen and set up the production company Rotwang Film with Patrick Brandt in 1993 and his own production company Feuerland Film in 2007. His other films include: Der Sommer des Samurai (1986), Operation Madonna (Der Madonna-Mann, 1987), Rotwang muss weg! (1994), Beim nächsten Kuss knall ich ihn nieder (1995), Deutschlandspiel (TV, 2000), Hirnschal gegen Hitler (TV, 2000), Planet der Kannibalen (2001), Die letzte Schlacht (TV, 2004), and Waiting for Angelina (Warten auf Angelina, 2008).

**World Sales** (please contact)  
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Dorotheenstrasse 143 · 22299 Hamburg/Germany  
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Oliver is lonely. All he’s ever wanted is a family to fill his home on the 18th floor of an abandoned apartment building. So he steals one: A wife, three kids, a grandma, a granddad and a dog. Oliver carefully selects specific people to fulfill these roles. Now he has his perfect family. A dream come true.

Completely walled in from the world outside, Oliver has enough food to keep his new family fed for six months. He sets up strict family rules which he claims will guarantee their happiness. But the hostility of six kidnapped strangers was something he never bargained for.

It’s hard to hide from each other when you’re walled in 24/7, and all the neuroses and personal problems in each of Oliver’s ‘guests’ are soon revealed. But through the fear, frustration and anxiety of their situation, each guest confronts their inner demons to discover more about themselves than they ever could in the ‘outside world’.

Can people who don’t belong together grow together before they kill each other? Is happiness possible?

Oliver will find out. So will his bunch.

**Genre** Drama-Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Marc Meyer  
**Screenplay** Marc Meyer  
**Director of Photography** Peter Polsak  
**Editor** Diana Karsten  
**Music by** Christian Biegai  
**Production Design** Agi Dawaachu  
**Producer** Faysal Omer  
**Production Company** miko-film/Berlin  
**Principal Cast** Samuel Finzi, Nina Kronjaeger, Anna Maria Muehe, Harald Warmbrunn, Margot Nagel, Ennio Incannova  
**Casting** Weldy & Seibicke  
**Length** 99 min  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** DTS Digital  
**Festival Screenings** Cottbus 2007 (Closing Film), Braunschweig 2007, Luenen 2007 (Opening Film)  
**Awards** Promotion Prize of the DEFA Foundation Cottbus 2007, Prize of the Student Jury 16+ Luenen 2007  
**With backing from** Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Kuratorium junger deutscher Film  
**German Distributor** ZORRO Filmverleih/Munich

Marc Meyer studied Political Science, followed by work as a freelance writer and director. *Family Rules!* (Wir sagen Du! Schatz) is his first feature film.

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The main “character” of G8 – Fenced Off is the fence, which serves as a new interpretation for terms like Freedom, Security, Democracy and illustrates topics focused on in the investigation, like being excluded, the residents, bar owners, critics of the G8, police officers, press representatives, fence builders and soldiers. Together, they all have to stay outside the fence, while the eight most powerful politicians of this world try to find the answers to the most significant problems on this planet. In the name of the people, of course.

“A 13 km-long fence shall protect the leaders of the G8 Meeting”: that was the news that was spread throughout the media at the end of last year.

A 13 km-long fence and an expense of 100 million Euros for a meeting to last 3 days? 16,000 police officers to protect the G8 leaders? Who came up with such an idea? What's up with that fence? Who shall be separated from whom? What danger shall it oppose? Is it really about security or is the fence more like a symbol? And if so, what for?

The filmmakers searched for the answers to those significant questions. The concerned parties that they encountered at the fence gave them a clue. And even the police mentioned activities that were interventions of civil liberties.

**Genre** Society, Politics  
**Category** Documentary TV  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Directors** Andreas Horn, Armin Marewski  
**Screenplay** Andreas Horn, Armin Marewski  
**Director of Photography** Andreas Horn  
**Editor** Katja Hahn  
**Producer** Rainer Koelmel  
**Production Company** Kinowelt Filmproduktion/Munich, in cooperation with ZDF/Mainz, 3sat/Mainz  
**Length** 70 min  
**Format** DigiBeta, color, 16:9  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Mono

Andreas Horn was born in 1965 in Mannheim and studied Communication Design and Film in Wuerzburg. Since then, he has worked as a writer, editor, cameraman, producer and director for various public broadcasters.

Armin Marewski was born in 1964 in Berlin. He studied Architecture in Frankfurt and Acting in Stuttgart. After engagements at various German theaters, he began acting for the cinema and television. He is also active as a writer and dramaturgic consultant.
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GERMAN FILMS: A PROFILE

German Films Service + Marketing is the national information and advisory center for the promotion of German films worldwide. It was established in 1954 under the name Export-Union of German Cinema as the umbrella association for the Association of German Feature Film Producers, since 1966 the Association of New German Feature Film Producers and the Association of German Film Exporters, and operates today in the legal form of a limited company. In 2004, new shareholders came on board the Export-Union which from then on continued operations under its present name: German Films Service + Marketing GmbH.

Shareholders are the Association of German Feature Film Producers, the Association of New German Feature Film Producers, the Association of German Film Exporters, the German Federal Film Funds (FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmfoerderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Filmstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution – currently amounting to €343,000 – towards the work of German Films.

Members of the advisory board are: Alfred Huermer (chairman), Peter Dinges, Antonio Exacoustos, Dr. Klaus Schaefer, Ulrike Schauz, and Michael Weber.

German Films itself has 14 members of staff:
- Christian Dorsch, managing director
- Mariette Rissenbeek, public relations/deputy managing director
- Petra Bader, office manager
- Kim Behrendt, PR assistant/festival coordinator
- Sandra Buchta, project coordinator/documentary film
- Myriam Gauff, project coordinator
- Simon Goehler, trainee
- Christine Harrasser, managing director’s assistant/project coordinator
- Angela Hawkins, publications & website editor
- Barbie Heusinger, project coordinator/distribution support
- Nicole Kaufmann, project coordinator
- Michaela Kowal, accounts
- Martin Scheuring, project coordinator/short film
- Konstanze Welz, project coordinator/television

In addition, German Films has 10 foreign representatives in nine countries.

German Films’ budget of presently €5.4 million comes from film export levies, the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and the FFA. The seven main regional film funds (FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmfoerderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Filmstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution – currently amounting to €343,000 – towards the work of German Films.

German Films is a founding member of the European Film Promotion, a network of 27 European film organizations (including Unifrance, Swiss Films, Austrian Film Commission, Holland Film, among others) with similar responsibilities to those of German Films. The organization, with its headquarters in Hamburg, aims to develop and realize joint projects for the presentation of European films on an international level.

German Films’ range of activities includes:
- Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, Toronto, Locarno, San Sebastian, Montreal, Karlovy Vary, Moscow, Nyon, Shanghai, Rotterdam, San Francisco, Sydney, Goeteborg, Warsaw, Thessaloniki, Rome, and Turin, among others
- Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets (Berlin, Cannes, AFM Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Shanghai)
- Staging of the “German Premieres” industry screenings in New York, Los Angeles, Washington D. C., and Rome
- Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, video, and television
- Providing advice and information for German filmmakers and press on international festivals, conditions of participation, and German films being shown
- Organization of the annual NEXT GENERATION short film program, which presents a selection of shorts by students of German film schools and is premiered every year at Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry (German Films Quarterly), as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- An Internet website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, as well as information and links to German and international film festivals and institutions
- Organization of the selection procedure for the German entry for the OSCAR for Best Foreign Language Film
- Collaboration with Deutsche Welle’s DW-TV KINO program which features the latest German film releases and international productions in Germany
- Organization of the “German Films Previews” geared toward European arthouse distributors and buyers of German films
- Selective financial Distribution Support for the foreign releases of German films
- On behalf of the association Rendez-vous franco-allemands du cinéma, organization with Unifrance of the annual German-French film meeting

In association and cooperation with its shareholders, German Films works to promote feature, documentary, television and short films.
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